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FEET OF GOLD

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ILLUSTRATIONS BY ALONZO KIMBALL

I

WHEN Ferdinand Taillandy, poet, pagan, and wanderer on the face of the earth, had completed his great epic he felt, surging high within him, the call of Paris. For eight years he had traversed on foot the untrammelled wilds, keeping his ear ever close to the breast of nature, that his soul might be in tune with her moods. For eight years he had worshipped nature, seeking no divinity save her, and finding in her one god made manifest in many forms. To his deep-seeing eyes there were dryads lurking in the trees and in the glades and in the groves; there were naiads in the springs and in the rivers and in the lakes; there were nereids in the seas, and always there was Pan, piping in the forests or on the hills. And so he bent the knee to all nature, and knew no other god but her.

But, his epic finished, he craved, like all poets, a publisher—he was not content to sing merely to himself. And, moreover, he knew that the epic was good. The need of a publisher, then, was his pretext for turning his face to the north and to Paris, but it was scarcely this need that so quickened his feet and his heart. It was more than that, certainly—it was rather the exhilaration that the exile feels when he is about to return home.

Said Taillandy to himself: "I left Paris of my own will; I despise Paris; Paris has caused me only great suffering; Paris is neither Christian nor pagan; if I go to Paris I am a retrograde—but, oh, ye gods, hasten my feet and strengthen my heart, that I may get to Paris the more quickly!"

This is comprehensible and excusable only because Paris was his first home. Granting that (and any one will vouch for it), the conclusion is as inevitable as that of a geometrical proposition, and we can wonder only that he resisted the homing instinct so long.

He went north by forced marches, following the Rhone through Avignon and Valence to Lyon, and the Saône to Chalon; thence, by Dijon, Tonnerre, Sens, and Melun, to Paris and the Porte de Charenton. The last twenty-five kilometres he made during the night, for something kept him at it, made him loath to stop and sleep with the goal so close.

It was a thick, heavy morning, then, in November when he passed through the octroi and said to himself: "I am home." And it was a morning of mist that was almost rain. The stallions, harnessed in single file to the market-carts, were slipping on the treacherous cobblestones, straining with all their magnificent shoulders at the traces—supremely willing but not always successful. Taillandy, appreciative of the play of their muscles, stopped to admire them; and while he stopped he became aware of a woman standing at his elbow.

He did not trouble to look at her, for

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women, as individuals, were of little account in his life. He had loved one woman an once and been sorry for it. That was enough. Perhaps she had been afraid of his intensity; perhaps he had given her too much of himself; perhaps he had endeavored to halo mortal clay—or perhaps she had been simply a timorous, flexible little thing with an empty blond head and a heart that he, at least, had been unable to quicken. At any rate, I know that she had told him that she loved him, and then the first breeze of parental opposition had blown her into another man's arms. That is the story—we will not strive to place the blame.

To Taillandy, then, women were interesting only *en masse:* they stood for something, they *must* stand for something. After all, one half the population of the earth could not exist merely that children might be born. No, there was doubtless some mystery about them that accounted for their existence—above all, that accounted for their power. Why else should they (as they undoubtedly did) motivate men? Why should they have swayed nations and killed kings? He gave it up, but he continued, nevertheless, his ardent worship of Diana the Huntress and of Venus Genetrix.

The woman who stood at Taillandy's elbow was, at first glance, in no way a remarkable person, and it was by sheer accident that they came to know each other. A slippery pavement, three stallions harnessed to an overloaded cart, a quick-tempered driver—there was the accident, and there the beginning of Taillandy's further education in women.

The cart had stopped in the middle of the road, just within the gates, and the three stallions seemed powerless to move it an inch forward. Obviously this delayed traffic, and of course the *agent de police* on duty became flushed and excited, imparting much of his mood to the driver of the cart. The driver unsheathed his whip, short of handle and long and cruel of lash, and sent it circling and shivering across the back of the leader. It was poor policy, for the animal had not been unwilling. At the stroke he started, slipped, and plunged in the traces; his hoofs struck sparks from the pavement as they slid and floundered, struggling in vain for a foothold, and finally, snorting and writhing, his legs went from under him and he fell over on his side.

The woman next to Taillandy gave a little cry, half fear and half pity, and clutched at his arm. When he turned he saw that she was very white—and not unbeautiful.

"Come," he said, "let us get out of this. There is nothing one can do when beasts are whipping beasts."

She tottered, clinging to his elbow.

"I think," she said, "that I am going to faint."

"I am sorry; try not to for a moment," he recommended.

He almost carried her to the nearest sidewalk café, put her into an iron chair behind an iron table, and ordered a cognac.

She drank it and shivered at the heat of it.

"Thank you, monsieur," she said. Then, slowly and for the first time, she raised her eyes to look at him.

Taillandy still clung to his thirties, and his eight years of nomadic life had kept him young and buoyant. He was not handsome—he was remarkable. Once you had seen him you would never forget him: those eyes with the sparkle of the poet burning in them; that thin, brown face with the crooked mouth and the hawk's nose; those slim, capable hands; and that lean, restless body, jutting out angularly from his abominable clothes.

The woman looked at him, and her eyes widened in astonishment. Looking at her, he reflected that astonishment became her. She was at her best expressing astonishment.

"I am very hideous, am I not?" he remarked pleasantly—almost casually.

Recovering herself, she looked quickly away, and answered very demurely and properly:

"I beg your pardon, monsieur; of course you are not at all hideous. And I am very grateful to you. You were kind—and—and I am afraid that I detain you."

He laughed a little—quietly, as men laugh who are accustomed to being alone.

"My dear," said he, "from what do you detain me? Am I not in Paris where I wish to be? What more can I desire?

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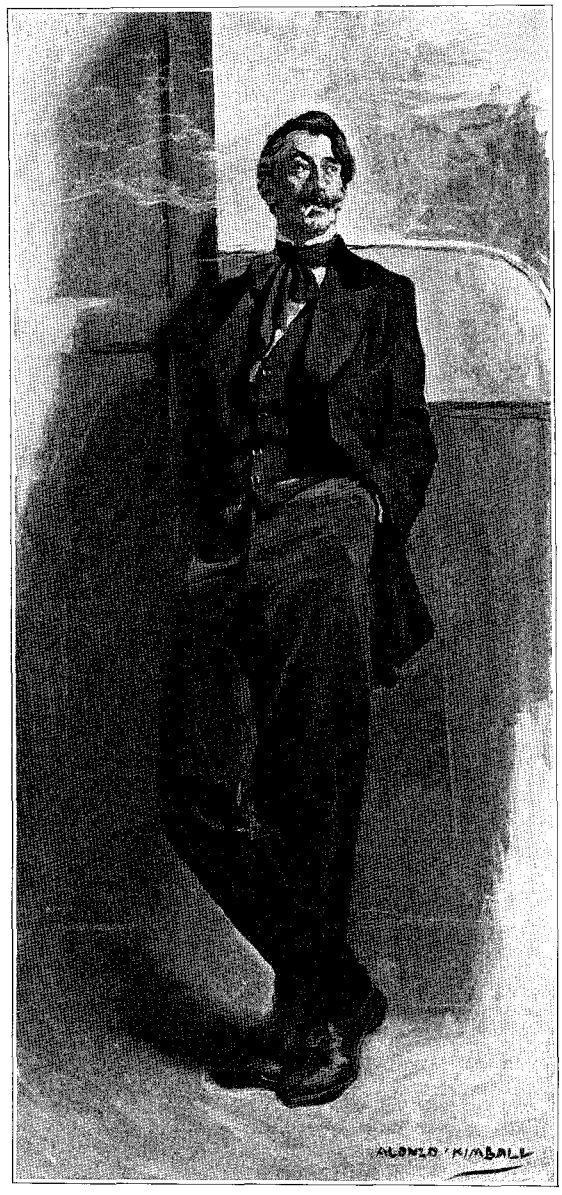
Should I some day scale Olympus and be admitted through the gates, do you suppose that, once inside, I should object to being detained by—well, let us say by Diana?"

She did not follow this flight—naturally not—but she caught at the last word.

"Diane!" she exclaimed. "How strange that you should have guessed my name!"

"You are called Diane?" he inquired.



Ferdinand Taillandy.

"But yes," she affirmed.

"*Et voilà*," said he, stretching out his hands as if he had won his case. "You see? Great is Diane!—Diane of what?—of the Ephesians?"

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She shook her head, at a loss.

"No," she said—"of Evremont-sur-Seine."

The name must have awakened some memory for him, for he frowned and squinted up his eyes.

"No, no—don't tell me," he commanded, as she was about to speak. "Let me think. Evremont-sur-Seine . . . Ah! I have it! A little village on the river with poplars patrolling the banks. A little iridescent village, all light and bright and clean—with a watering-trough in the square—and sparrows. Yes, hundreds of sparrows. And a lark or two for the morning. And a shop where, if one is a Christian, one should take off one's hat and kneel. Ah, yes—now I remember, now I remember! She was called Madame Nicolas, she who kept the shop, and she was a saint. I am no Christian—I am a pagan—but Madame Nicolas . . . Ah, well, one does not have to be a Christian to do homage to a Christian saint."

He was carried out of himself; he was aglow with the enthusiasm of remembering; and he was disappointed to find that Diane remained quiet, unkindled.

"You don't know her, then," he protested—"you don't know Madame Nicolas?"

She shook her head, and he perceived, at length, that she was crying as quietly and secretly as possible.

"Ah," said he softly, and then again, "Ah!" But for the present he said no more about Madame Nicolas. Rather he arose, called loudly for the check, paid it, put his hand on her shoulder, and, with great heartiness, exclaimed: "Now we shall go and breakfast. You are hungry and so am I. We shall traverse Paris and breakfast at the Closerie des Lilas, where, once upon a time, I was at home. Come—*allons, mon enfant! En avant!*"

She protested—not very vehemently. She claimed she was not a cheerful companion; he had better seek some one else; it was one of her sad days. Besides, she was not well dressed—her shoes and her blouse . . . He laughed loudly, pointed to his own rags, and more especially to the hole in the top of his hat which revealed his straight, long black hair.

"What do we care for clothes!" he cried. "Are we not young and beautiful? Diana and—and Pan. Hand in hand they will now enter a *fiacre!*"

He was not to be thwarted in his holiday mood. Moreover, for some reason or other, the thought of quitting her displeased him. He wanted a companion to encourage him, to laugh at and with him, above all to listen to him. Perhaps he was beginning at last to realize in a small way why it is good that women exist.

Taillandy, at least, enjoyed that drive to the full. He was thrusting his head constantly from the windows to point out places that he remembered and places that he would never forget. At first they kept to the Seine—he couldn't see enough of the Seine—and he prided himself on his ability to call each bridge by its name.

"Presently," said he, "when we have passed the Halle aux Vins, we shall come to the Boulevard Saint-Germain. Then we shall leave the river. . . . There, what did I tell you? *Au revoir*, Seine! Hail, Musée de Cluny and Ecole de Médecine! To the left, *cocher!* One must see the Odéon. Ah, the famous days—and the famous nights, *parbleu!*"

Always he grew more eager, more excited. By Zeus, was he not back again in his own Paris after eight years? Why, then, pretend to be calm? Diane, of course, had not attempted to suggest that he be calm. She liked him the way he was—tempestuous, vibrant, a boy.

They drew up with a flourish in front of the Closerie des Lilas on the Boulevard du Montparnasse. It was his favorite haunt in the old days, in the old days eight years ago when he damned women and strove to forget them all because one had forgotten him. There it was that men had first called him great; there it was that, when he was sober, much of his early poetry had been written; and there it was that they had crowned him king. He found that, as he paid the driver, his eyes were dim.

"My dear," said he to Diane, "if you don't make me laugh, I shall begin to cry."

"What is it that troubles you?" she asked, a hand on his arm.

He smiled crookedly and answered: "Eight years of absence—that is all."

"It is a great deal," said she soberly. "I understand."

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He changed his mood with an effort, and became deliberately gay.

"Ah, well," he cried, "we shall see what is altered. We shall see whether they still remember Ferdinand Taillandy."

He was not kept long in doubt. A waiter in shirt-sleeves and apron who was brushing the floor, stood up from his task as they entered, and, seeing Taillandy, raised his hands heavenward in a delirium of joy and astonishment.

"But it is Monsieur Ferdinand!" he cried. "Or else perhaps his ghost!"

Taillandy, jubilant at the immediate recognition, extended two hands and said warmly: "My good Hippolyte—my good Hippolyte!"

A buxom lady in black came hurrying out from behind her high desk, her fingers busy at her hair (for she was not too young to be vain).

"Monsieur Ferdinand!" she exclaimed—"is it truly you returned to us? You will kill us with such sudden joy!" And she put a hand to her heart—or as close to her heart as her figure permitted.

"Dear Madame Maupin," answered Ferdinand, embracing her frenziedly.

He was aglow with the enthusiasm of remembering.—Page 134.

"You grow younger and more beautiful each year. Of what marvellous waters do you drink?"

"Always the Vichy Celestins," she answered; and then she slapped him coyly and said: "*Vieux blagueur!*"

For some minutes they stood off to appraise him, to take him all in, to see what changes eight years had wrought in him. Diane, temporarily neglected, hung in the background until Taillandy, feeling that she was ill at ease, led her forward by the arm and presented her to Madame Maupin as "his little friend Diane."

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"But I know Mademoiselle Diane," said the *caissière*. "Were you not here two nights ago with Monsieur Bruno, the artist?"

Diane nodded and blushed, looking quickly at Taillandy and as quickly away.

"Yes, madame," she said.

"Ah," said Taillandy—"with old Bruno, hein? I am surprised that that one still lives. And how do you like old Bruno?"

"He was—kind," answered Diane; "and I had had nothing to eat for two days. Yes, he was kind. He fed me."

"It was the least he could do!" exclaimed Taillandy—"the old satyr!"

Then he turned on her so suddenly that she started back with a little cry, frightened.

"And now!" he cried—"and now! How long is it since you have eaten? Answer me that. Or does Bruno still feed you?"

"I have left Monsieur Bruno," she replied after an interval. "I lost my position with the modiste on the Rue du Cherche-Midi. It was my own fault, because I did not apply myself to the work."

"How long is it since you have eaten, I ask?" interrupted Taillandy fiercely.

"When I met you, monsieur," she said bravely, "I was going to breakfast."

He grunted his disbelief.

"Where were you going to breakfast? At the Porte de Charenton? Not likely."

"I was going home to breakfast."

"Ah, you were going home? To Evremont-sur-Seine? Twenty-six kilometres, hein?"

"Yes, monsieur."

"And how were you going?"

"I was planning to walk, monsieur," she said.

"Ah—*voilà!* Now at last we have it. You were going to walk twenty-six kilometres for your breakfast because you didn't have a copper sou. That pig of a Bruno! Why do the gods allow such tragedies on earth! Here, Hippolyte—hasten thyself—covers for two, and all that is best in the house. The poor child starves while we air our vocabularies. It is criminal—it is unbelievable. *Allez—heup!*"

She permitted him to lead her to a seat—he did it in the grand manner, but cheerfully and with many lavish gestures, gallantly pretending that he did not see the tears in her eyes. And while they ate he regaled her with a spirited monologue. He dwelt much on her name—that seemed to delight him—and he elaborated on it, calling her his Diana of the Moon, or his Goddess of the Chase. It amused him to pretend that they were feasting on Olympus. She, of course, was unable to follow his rhetoric, but so long as he enjoyed himself she was pleased; and she ate with a good appetite and no affectation.

When she had finished the *omelette aux fines herbes* the color came back into her cheeks and she was able to laugh with him. He bade Hippolyte, whom for the moment he had christened Bacchus, to fetch them some red wine from the cellar—"a good wine, Bacchus, not too heavy; a wine in which one can taste the grapes."

It was forthcoming, and he drank her health very gravely—her health and her *beaux yeux;* for he now perceived for the first time that she had large, dark eyes.

At the coffee he stretched his long legs straight out under the table, lighted a cigarette, and sighed comfortably and profoundly.

"Now," said he, with a smile at his mouth, "I will talk about myself. Shall you like that?"

"But yes," she encouraged him naïvely; "you talk so well. You must have studied a great deal. I, as you see, am very ignorant. I know nothing."

He laughed quietly.

"Come," he said, "that is not so. You know a great deal. You knew enough to start for home when you were hungry. I, on the contrary, when I was hungry—I went away from home and lost myself for eight years. But it was not food-hunger that drove me away. Rather it was the hunger for consolation. That is why I went alone. One communes better with nature when one is alone. You see, the stars will not sing for an audience, and the trees will not whisper to a crowd. And the nymphs—ah, yes, my friend, the nymphs are shy."

He paused, not to contemplate her, but, perhaps, to contemplate his thoughts.

"You are a poet," said she, her eyes large with wonder and admiration.

"I hope so," he answered—"I hope so."

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"You are a great poet," she continued with growing awe.

"I thank you," said he. "At least I am not a prolific one."

This brought him up to the remembrance of his epic and the reason for his being in Paris. I think that he had been in a fair way to forget both—he was so completely at home there at his favorite table that the eight years of wandering and working seemed scarcely to have intervened.

"Ha!" he exclaimed—"that brings me to myself. I have work to do this morning. I must see my publisher. And you, my Diane, what do you intend to do?"

She shrugged her shoulders. What was there for her to do? He questioned her a little. Did she desire to return home to Evremont-sur-Seine? She did not dare. She was afraid they would not want her. But had she not thought to return there this morning when he had met her at the Porte de Charenton?

"Yes, monsieur," she said in a very low voice. "I was very tired and I had not eaten, and—and I knew that I should not be able to walk that far. But I thought that it would be better to try."

He looked at her searchingly. Then said he: "What you mean to say is that you thought it would be better to drop by the roadside than to fall into the river."

She nodded. "Yes, monsieur. I was not happy."

"Compassionate gods!" he cried, banging the table with his fist. "You were not happy! There speaks Mélisande. No, indeed, you were not happy! You were wretched, you were miserable, you were starving, and your poor little heart was dying within you—fluttering and trembling like a stricken bird. There, that is the city for you—that is the city's work."

Here, forgetting his recent enthusiasm for that self-same city, he relapsed into the mood of bitterness and distrust that had driven him from Paris eight years ago. He condemned the city and everything connected with it—it was artificial, it was brutal, it was sordid, it was ugly, it was selfish, it was a tyrant. It stifled the heart and it murdered the soul.

His philippic ending as abruptly as it had begun, he reached across the table and took her hand.

"Listen, my little one," he said, "listen to me. You are too young and too sweet to remain in this pest-hole. I am going to care for you from now on—you shall be my charge. I am going to snatch you from the maw of this monster of a city before it gets your heart and your soul as well as your body. It will be one good deed at least credited to the account of Ferdinand Taillandy before he dies. They can carve it on my tombstone if they wish: 'He plucked a flower from the mire of a Christian city and planted it in the garden of the gods.' Ha! That is something to have done, is it not? And I shall revel in it. To-morrow we shall start—you and I. To-morrow in the clean, white dawn. And I shall lead you to the garden. I will take you by the hand and show you the wide spaces of the world; and you shall behold the sun with new eyes; and the breeze shall blow through your unbound hair; and you shall bathe in the streams and rest on the sweet earth and sleep dreamlessly under the singing stars! . . . Will you come with me?"

She hesitated. His eloquence had her bound hand and foot, and at his nod she would have followed him to the world's end. She was commencing to worship him; but she was a woman and it was a woman's reason that made her hesitate.

"I have nothing to wear, monsieur—" she began timidly.

He swept the objection aside with a grand gesture of his arm.

"So much the better!" he cried. "We shall travel the lighter. Will you come with me?"

She thrilled to his enthusiasm. She was proud to be his follower.

"I will go with you anywhere," she said, "whenever you say you are ready." And she gave him her two hands across the table as a pledge. He took them, sawed them violently up and down in the air, reached over and kissed her fraternally on the forehead.

"Good!" he said. "Meet me here for dinner at seven this evening. We will plan. Now I go to my publisher. *Au revoir.*"

Before she realized it he was out of the room; but, as suddenly, he was back again.

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"Here," he explained, "I had almost forgotten. One must pay to live and we shall be separated for ten hours. Take this and buy yourself some solid boots and some thick stockings. One should be well shod to climb Olympus."

II

THAT was a memorable night at the Closerie des Lilas—and not only that night, but, I regret to say, several ensuing nights; for Taillandy, to Diane's chagrin, could not bear to tear himself away from the city and his old disciples and comrades. Once more he forgot how intensely he hated Paris, remembering only how madly he loved it. The pagan child of nature reverted and became the *boulevardier* and the café prophet.

But that first night was responsible for the lapse. Taillandy enjoyed himself so hugely on that first night that it was only human of him to crave a second and a third. It was always: "To-morrow morning, my little Diane, we will leave all this behind us," and always on the morrow there was some unreasonable reason why the departure should be postponed.

Diane, disappointed grievously at first, grew depressed and then worried. Had her great godlike poet, then, feet of clay? She thrust the suspicion resolutely from her as unworthy, and instead, womanlike, she endeavored to see what she could do to help him. She knew that he was too good to be wasting his days and his nights in the Closerie des Lilas. She knew, too, that champagne is no fitting diet for poets—especially for poets who are great enough to be inspired without it—and so she found herself mothering her hero. Worshipping him, of course—she would always do that—but mothering him at the same time. A curious state of affairs.

Taillandy's publishers, it seemed, had been exuberantly glad to see him. His "Triomphe de l'Amour" and his "Tombeau de l'Amour" had made him famous, and his eight years of absence had given him a sort of posthumous halo. If he were not dead, why, so much the better. In brief, they gave him a thousand francs in advance for the epic and a generous royalty on its sale.

Of that thousand francs Taillandy spent seven hundred and ninety-six during the next four days—ninety-six, possibly, on himself, and the balance on his friends.

He had returned to the Closerie des Lilas that first afternoon and had instructed Hippolyte and Madame Maupin that he intended to entertain that evening from dinner-time to dawn. They were to invite any and all of his old associates whom they should see. Everything in the house was to be free, and he, by Bacchus, would foot the bills.

The result was that when Taillandy entered the Lilas at seven o'clock he was amazed to discover what an army of friends he could lay claim to. Never had the café been so crowded.

There was Bruno, the artist, who, he remembered with an inexplicable pang, was also Diane's friend; there was Jacques Gaumont, a minor poet who was attempting to follow in the great Taillandy's footsteps, and who succeeded merely in being very shabbily dressed and very enthusiastic; there was Baskoff, the Russian, a sculptor of the futurist school, half mad and wholly unprepossessing; there was *le petit* Martel, in velveteens, who cried loudly for a return to the good old days of Bohemia, but who sometimes dined surreptitiously at the Café de Paris in full-dress clothes with a *chapeau à huit reflets;* there were the two bearded, gray-headed veterans who remembered Delacroix and very little else; there was a young architect or two from the Beaux-Arts, and there were a score of others—nondescripts, driftwood, some of them mad but talented, others mediocre but sane. Also, there were a dozen girls—models, midinettes, dancers, and daughters of joy.

At Taillandy's entrance they arose with a roar of delight. They embraced him, they kissed him on both cheeks, they pounded his back, they cheered him deafeningly. He was the only one of them worth while, and subconsciously they knew it and acknowledged it. Moreover, since he had once been one of them, they now felt a certain responsibility in his success. Had they not contributed to his greatness by their encouragement? Had he not perhaps imbibed some of his inspiration from their companionship? There was not a man there that did not envy his fame, but there was not a man there that begrudged it.

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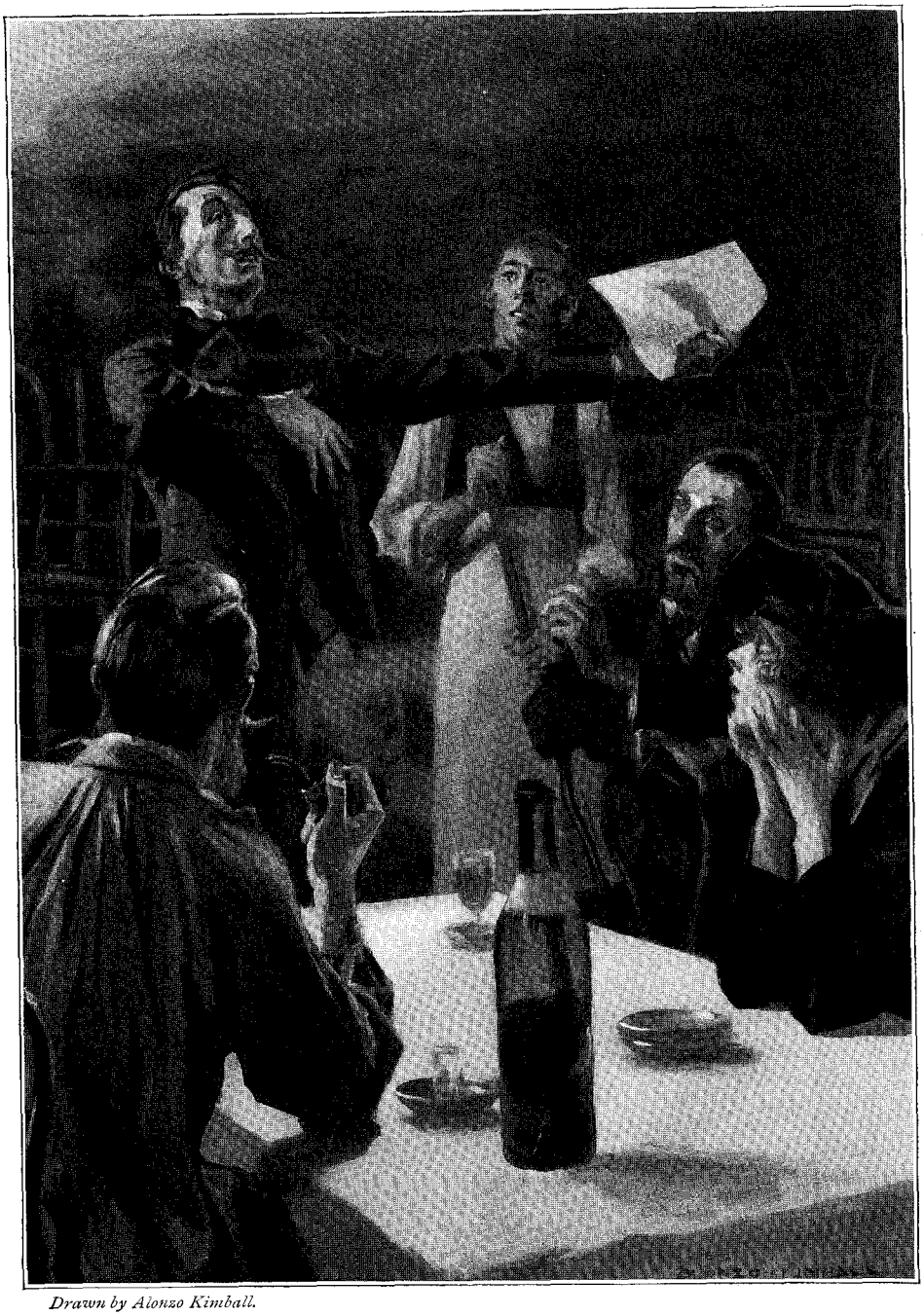

Drawn by Alonzo Kimball.

What he read was his "Hymn to Diana Imprisoned."—Page 143.

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When the first commotion had somewhat subsided, Taillandy commanded Hippolyte to serve dinner. But first he inquired for Diane. Had any one seen Diane?

"Has any one seen whom?" asked Bruno, who was at his elbow.

"Diane—Diane," answered Taillandy impatiently. And then, remembering, he added, with a frown: "You know her, Bruno, I believe. At least it was not your fault that she did not starve."

"Ah, you wrong me," said the artist. "I would have fed her for life, but she would not permit it. She left me—she disappeared."

"She did well," replied Taillandy gravely.

Bruno looked at him quizzically, shrugged his shoulders and went to take his place at a table.

"Our Ferdinand is in love," he announced. "That will mean some very bad lyrics, I fear. It is regrettable."

Taillandy remained at the door, smoking furiously, with an eye on the clock. He would not sit down, he said, until Diane arrived. No, nor would he drink. There would be plenty of time for that.

Presently the door opened and Diane stepped hesitatingly into the smoke-stained light of the restaurant. She was a little out of breath, for she had been walking fast, and there was color in her cheeks and a wet sparkle in her eye.

"Ah, my little one," said Taillandy, "you are late."

"I am sorry," she answered. "I hurried as fast as I could. See, I have bought the stout boots and the thick stockings, as you desired me to do, so that we might climb—what was that mountain?"

"Olympus," said he. "You were wise, for it is a hard climb. Come now and sit down. I have kept a place for you on my right. You will eat while I talk; and you need not listen, for I shall talk nonsense. I intend that this, my one night in Paris, shall be remembered. It is to be a very gay night."

"But we start at dawn to-morrow, do we not?" she reminded him.

"Assuredly, assuredly. That is why we must make the most of these few hours."

He installed her beside him with great ceremony, as if she were the queen of a carnival. Then he motioned to Hippolyte to open the champagne. . . .

Toward midnight Taillandy, in response to repeated toasts to himself and his work, rose rather unsteadily to his feet and made a speech.

"Friends—comrades," he began—"and fellow artists, no man here is better than his neighbor: therefore there is no reason why I should be called upon to speak ahead of any other man present. All of us are alike in that all of us are seeking, each in his own way, the Truth. Naturally, since all of us are artists, we seek the Truth through Beauty; and when I say Beauty I spell it with a capital B, because Beauty, as I understand it, is more than a noun—it is religion. Now, to my eyes, Beauty exists wherever man does not intrude the ugly work of his hands. The world, if left to itself, would be universally beautiful, and in like manner a man's soul, if isolated and uncontaminated by man-created ugliness, would of necessity be beautiful. A child's soul, for example, is beautiful—how long? Why, until the child learns to talk and to hear and to understand the evil of men. In short, it is the herding of men together in cities and communities, it is the daily contact with artificiality, it is the galling yoke that we call modern civilization that has banished Beauty out of our lives and so has banished Truth.

"Granting (and I am sure you will grant it) that if a man have no responsibilities he will be happy, we may go on to say that if he be happy he will be in tune with the beautiful, and receptive to Beauty. What, then, is the lesson? Does it not cry aloud in your ears? Be free! Throw off the shackles of civilization that weigh you down, go forth into the world, keep close to the Beauty that the gods have revealed to you in nature and, casting down your false idols, bow the knee only to her. Cease to be slaves—be free!"

He sat down to great applause. Perhaps they were in a mood to applaud anything, for they were unaccustomed to champagne at sixteen francs the bottle. Taillandy drained his glass, refilled it, and drained it again. Then he turned to Diane: "Do not forget," he said; "we leave at dawn to-morrow."

"Do you think I could forget?" she reproached him.

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But they did not leave at the dawn of the morrow; for at that hour Taillandy was sleeping most uncomfortably on Bruno's sofa, whither he had been carried with difficulty by three well-meaning but unsteady friends. As for Diane, she had cried herself to sleep in a room over the café that Madame Maupin had placed at her disposal for the night. She was up and dressed, however, at daybreak, hoping against hope that her hero would not forget to come for her; and she waited, sad-eyed at the door, watching the stars pale in the face of the glow that came slowly out of the east, watching the roofs and the chimney-pots take form against a lightening sky, watching the shadows of the houses stretch their blue lengths along the street.

Madame Maupin, descending cheerfully from a dreamless sleep, found her at a table by the door, with her face in her hands. Madame Maupin, taking in the situation with the intuition of a true Frenchwoman, strove to console her, saying: "Come, my little cabbage, you must not cry. He will be back, and there are a great many more mornings ahead of you. He is doubtless a little tired, that is all, and if he is tired you surely do not begrudge him his sleep."

Diane dried her eyes and tried to smile.

"Yes, yes," she said. "I am very foolish. But I love him so much, Madame Maupin."

"Of course you do. Every one does. He is a wonderful man, Monsieur Ferdinand is. And a great poet. You must remember that and make allowances; for all great poets get drunk. They tell me that Monsieur Paul Verlaine was—well, no matter. I do not remember him, and he is dead now. But he was a great poet and a wonderful drinker, too."

Diane, never having heard of Monsieur Paul Verlaine, was of course not greatly interested. She felt that it was all the fault of Paris—that it was Paris that was reaching out hideous, soiled hands to drag her idol from his pedestal. And it was then that the high resolve came to her to save Ferdinand from this soul-devouring monster. I doubt if the irony of the situation entered her mind. I doubt if she remembered that originally it had been he who was to save *her* from the maw of Paris, who was to "pluck the flower from the mire of a Christian city and plant it in the garden of the gods."

At eleven o'clock a perfectly cheerful Taillandy swung into the café, arm-in-arm with Bruno and *le petit* Martel, and found a Diane, serene and resolved, there to receive him.

He kissed her good morning on the forehead, inquired how she had slept, was glad that Madame Maupin had extended her hospitality, and, worst of all, asked Madame Maupin if she would be good enough to repeat the offer that night or any other night should it be necessary. He would gladly pay the bill.

"But," ventured Diane, "do we not leave to-morrow surely?"

"Of course, my little one," he answered—"of course. To-morrow at dawn. But it is well to be prepared in case something should intervene to delay us."

Then, complaining of a headache, he ordered absinthe for three and a *sirop de groseille* for Diane. And he took occasion to warn her never to drink absinthe—it was very injurious and led to all sorts of follies. Diane assured him that she would always abstain from it. She was uncomfortable; her heart was heavy; she wished that Bruno were not present—she hated Bruno—and she believed that, if she were allowed an hour alone with Taillandy, she could persuade him to return to his gods. But Bruno and *le petit* Martel, anticipating perhaps another evening similar to the last, stuck close to Taillandy's elbow, and saw to it that his glass (and their own glasses) remained full.

III

THE first four days that Taillandy spent in Paris had a striking similarity. I have pictured one of them, endeavoring to deal with the poet's temporary downfall as leniently and as delicately as possible. Even average men have their evil moments and are held excusable; how much more readily, then, must we condone the lapses of a genius! I do not pretend that he was blameless, but, remember, he had passed eight years alone, and the reaction was bound to be extreme.

On the evening of the fourth day, when Diane saw that all the signs and omens pointed to another festival night, she took matters into her own hands and

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made a decisive step. Strange as it may seem, it was Bruno who aided her in her scheme to get Taillandy out of the city. Perhaps Bruno, being more advanced in years, was tiring of the dissipation; perhaps his heart was really excellent at bottom; perhaps he cared for Diane more unselfishly than he chose openly to admit. At any rate he rendered her invaluable assistance.

It was he who interviewed the owner and driver of the covered, two-wheeled market-cart, arranging with him that he should be at the Closerie des Lilas at two o'clock that morning.

"No vegetables, my friend," said Bruno; "we want no vegetables, but we desire plenty of straw on the floor in order that a stuffed turkey may repose comfortably thereupon. And it will be a large turkey —a hundred and fifty pounds."

The driver of the cart, disturbed at this, crossed himself violently.

"It is not a corpse that monsieur wishes me to drive in my wagon?"

Bruno laughed cheerfully.

"Not quite," he answered. "It will be breathing—fire and alcohol; but it will be breathing. Beyond that I promise nothing."

The driver was scarcely reassured. However, if it breathed, if monsieur guaranteed that it would breathe—well, for five francs more he would take the chance. So it was arranged.

"I have ordered Ferdinand's hearse," Bruno reported to Diane.

She cried out in horror. He must not say such things; and she, too, crossed herself precipitately.

At seven o'clock, the hour of dinner, when the fête usually commenced, the Closerie des Lilas was packed to the doors. All the guests were present, hungry, thirsty, licking their lips, but—there was no host.

"Where is he?" whispered Bruno to Diane.

"Where is he?" echoed *le petit* Martel.

"Where is he?" muttered the two veterans who remembered Delacroix.

"Where is he?" chorused the models and the midinettes and the daughters of joy.

Every one had the question, but no one the answer. Taillandy had not been seen by any one for over two hours. Each thought that he had been with one of the others. It was very strange.

At eight o'clock, with much grumbling, the guests were forced to order their own dinners, which, owing perhaps to the obnoxious prospect of paying the check out of their own pockets, they ate with little relish. Moreover, there was no sparkling wine of Champagne to flavor the meats, and no Taillandy to talk glorious nonsense.

Diane reluctantly, and for want of any plan of action, took her seat between Bruno and *le petit* Martel; but she kept her eyes steadfastly on the door and replied to all conversational efforts only in monosyllables. Nor did she eat.

As the hour advanced the gloom deepened. Bruno and *le petit* Martel, bored and fatigued, hazarded brutal guesses at the cause of Taillandy's non-appearance.

Said Bruno: "He is doubtless drunk in some other café."

Said *le petit* Martel: "It is probable that he has left Paris and gone back alone to converse with his gods."

It was this latter conjecture that hurt Diane the more. She had planned to save him and he had forgotten her very existence. His promises to her had been empty words. Heart-searing thoughts, these.

"Have no fear," she answered Bruno and *le petit* Martel bravely—"have no fear. He will come when he is ready."

"And you," insinuated Bruno, "will wait for him?"

"Yes," she said, "and I will wait for him."

"You are very faithful," observed *le petit* Martel with a snicker.

She flushed a little but let the remark pass. She did not choose to explain to them that she was Taillandy's disciple—not his mistress. Besides, something told her that they would not understand, that they would wink and nudge each other and snicker, even as *le petit* Martel had already snickered.

The clock struck twelve times—twelve weary, discouraged strokes. A few chairs were pushed back, a few checks (very modest ones) were paid, and a few of the guests yawned unaffectedly, said "He will not come," and departed. The two veterans who remembered Delacroix called for the backgammon-board, and immediately forgot the passage of time.

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The clock struck the half-hour—timidly unobtrusively, as if ashamed of itself. The Beaux-Arts students went gloomily home. Bruno lit his pipe and ordered a cognac and coffee. *Le petit* Martel, with a show of bravado, called for a bottle of champagne, then discreetly changed his mind and substituted a yellow chartreuse. They, at least, were determined to see it out if they were forced to remain there until dawn. Diane sat in silence, very tired, very miserable, ready to cry.

The clock struck one, surreptitiously, that people might perhaps think it was merely the half-hour. Hippolyte began to clear the tables and to pile up the chairs for the night. Madame Maupin was stacking up the day's receipts in little piles of copper, silver, and gold. The gold pile, she noted, was miserably small that evening.

And then, before the clock was forced to strike again, the door swung violently open and in came Taillandy, hatless, his hair on end, intoxicated, but not with wine. Intoxicated, rather, with the sense of great accomplishment.

He greeted no one, but cried loudly and exultantly: "I have done it! It is completed—and in six hours. Never have I worked so rapidly and so well. For it is good, my friends, it is good. Listen and judge for yourselves if it is not good. Oh, but I was in the vein to-night! I was tired—very tired—and I smoked fifty vile cigarettes and wrote fifty immortal lines. You see, I am not modest. That is because I *know* that it is good."

He was tremendously excited. There was a flush on his cheek-bones as of fever, and a feverish light burned in his eyes. The two sheets of paper that he held trembled and rattled in his hands as he stood in the middle of the room and began to read.

What he read was his "Hymn to Diana Imprisoned." We have all read it and recognized it as his greatest lyric; and we all remember, surely, the last quatrain, which some one has translated, poorly enough:

"Why dost thou tarry in the haunts of men?
Cast off the chains that bind thee, burst the bars!
The high gods call and, pleading, call again—
Come forth and live beneath the singing stars!"

Put that back into Taillandy's French and let Taillandy stand up and declaim it to you, and I warrant you'll feel a shiver of exhilaration run up your spine. For Taillandy knew how to read his verse—there is no gainsaying that.

When he finished he had them all fairly on their feet. The women, not understanding much of what he read them, nevertheless wept from sheer excitement, Madame Maupin the most conspicuously and copiously, Diane the most quietly. But there was a good bit of relief mingled with Diane's tears. She had her hero back, more of a hero than ever. Her idol's feet were not of clay but of gold. What woman could resist weeping with such excellent cause?

Vaguely she sensed that the invocation was addressed to her, that the poet had passed his evening in solitude, making her immortal in immortal verse, that, far from being forgotten by him, she had been ever before his inward eyes.

Triumphantly the clock struck two. Bruno was the only one to heed it; and he approached Diane and murmured: "It is two o'clock. The hearse should be at the door. Or shall we call it the triumphal chariot of fire that will bear him, like Elijah, up to heaven."

Before Diane could reply the driver of the two-wheeled cart squeezed his broad bulk through the door. He stood there, whip in hand, searching the room for his clients.

"What do you want?" inquired Taillandy, who was nearest him.

"My passengers," answered the driver.

"And who are they?" the poet persisted.

"God knows," said the driver. "But one of them, they told me, would be very drunk."

"I am very drunk," said Taillandy. "Wine never made me more so. Moreover, I see no one else who is in that condition. Accordingly I retain you. Is your wagon comfortable?"

"There is plenty of straw," answered the driver.

"Good. You are hired, then, until dawn; and we start at once."

He went to Diane and took her by the hand.

"Are you ready?" he asked.

"I am ready," said she.

"Then come. Let us return to the true gods who are calling to us."

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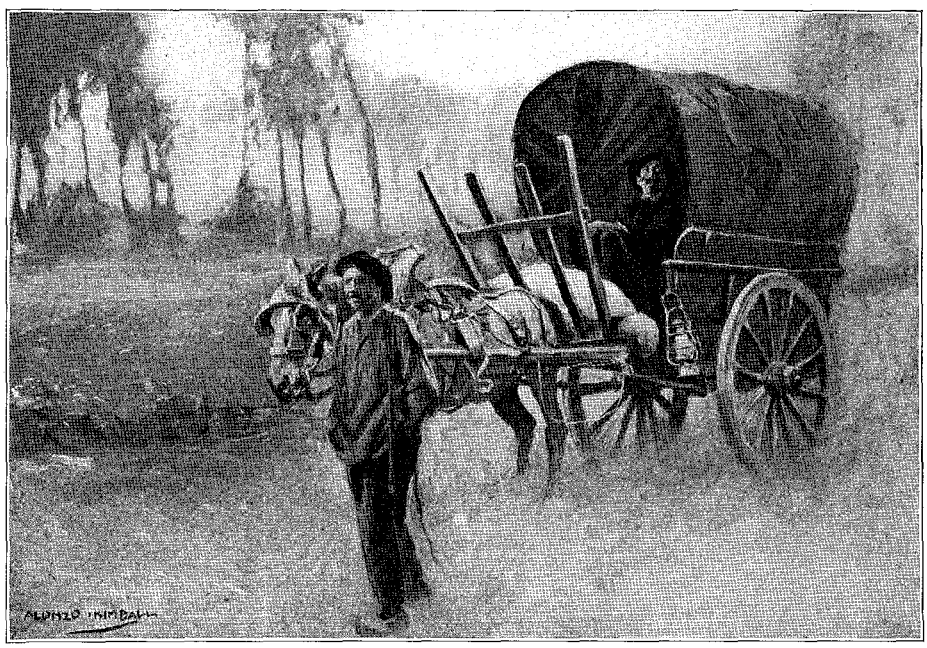

Taillandy sat upright on the driver's seat, with the cold light on his gaunt face and a warmer light glowing in his eyes.

He bowed very low, first to Madame Maupin, then to the room in general.

"Adieu," said he. "I earnestly hope that some day you will open your eyes and see that you are slaves."

With Diane on his arm he passed out of the door into the night. The cart stood at the curb, the huge percheron smoking in the chilly air. The driver climbed up into his seat, and Taillandy lifted Diane in his arms and placed her in the straw under the canvas cover. Then he himself took his seat beside the driver.

"You will be cold," suggested the latter.

"You are wrong," answered the poet; "I am on fire."

"As you will, m'sieu'. Where shall I drive to?"

Taillandy bent toward him and whispered in his ear.

"B'en, m'sieu'," said the driver. "I know the road well."

IV

At dawn—a white, cold dawn that turned the frost to silver—a covered two-wheeled cart jolted and rumbled into the public square of the village of Evremont-sur-Seine. Taillandy sat upright on the driver's seat, with the cold light on his gaunt face and a warmer light glowing in his eyes. Behind him, on the straw, lay Diane, sleeping like a child, with a child's smile at her lips.

"To the right here," said Taillandy softly, when they had crossed the square. "To the right, and then directly to the left. The shop next to the church."

The driver, obeying directions, drew up in front of a small two-story plaster house, the ground floor of which was devoted to a shop. In the windows were crucifixes, artificial wreaths, embroidered altar-cloths, and little gilded and painted images of saints. It was the last place one would have expected a pagan to visit.

But Taillandy, with no hesitation, rapped gently on the door, casting a benevolent glance, meanwhile, on the emblems of Roman Catholicism.

"It is well," he said to himself, "that there should be such people in the world. Does it matter, after all, what kindles the flame so long as it burns brightly?"

An elderly woman came to open the door—a woman with a face like one of her graven saints.

"Madame Nicolas," said Taillandy bowing, "you are awake early. May I come in to warm myself?"

"Certainly," she said. "Be good enough to enter. I am just now lighting the fire in the stove."

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He insisted on helping her with the coals. Then he said: "Madame Nicolas, you do not, of course, remember me. It is eighteen years since I used to come to this shop. I remember you, because you are the sort of woman one does not forget. I am called Ferdinand Taillandy."

"I remember you now, Monsieur Ferdinand," she answered. "You were an interesting boy."

"I take no credit for that," he disclaimed. "All boys are interesting. It is only men and women that are occasionally dull."

He hesitated an instant. Then he said: "Madame Nicolas, are your two daughters well?"

"Véronique is very well," she answered him quietly. "She is in the kitchen. Diane"—she faltered a little—"Diane has left us. She—she is working in Paris. We miss her a great deal."

"Ah," said Taillandy—"exactly."

Madame Nicolas searched his eyes anxiously with hers.

"Madame Nicolas," he continued abruptly after a silence—"Madame Nicolas, do you own a calf?"

"But no, Monsieur Ferdinand!" she exclaimed, surprised.

"That is a pity," he mused. "I regret that you do not own a calf."

"What should I do with a calf?"

"Kill it, of course," he replied brightly—"kill it! In honor of your daughter who is returned to you."

Madame Nicolas half-rose from her chair; then she fell back weakly, trembling.

"Diane," she breathed, "you have news of my Diane?"

"I have more than news, Madame Nicolas, I have Diane herself. She is asleep out there in the covered cart."

"God is merciful," said Madame Nicolas. "He has, in his own good time, answered my prayers."

"So be it," murmured the pagan. "Be very kind to Diane, for she has suffered much."

"Let me go to her," said Madame Nicolas. "My arms ache to hold her."

They went out into the chill morning. But Madame Nicolas did not know that it was cold. Taillandy raised the canvas flap at the back of the cart. Diane still slept on the straw, her head pillowed on her arm. As they watched her she stirred and sat upright, the smile still at her lips, for she had been happy in her sleep.

"Diane!" cried Madame Nicolas. "My blessed baby Diane—my blessed child!"

Taillandy turned away, pretending to shade his eyes from the sun.

"These Christians," he muttered, "are over-demonstrative." And he brushed a tear impatiently from his nose.

When he had hardened himself sufficiently to look around without betraying his lamentable weakness, he saw that he was forgotten. Diane was gathered close to Madame Nicolas's breast, and Madame Nicolas was crooning over her softly, as if, indeed, she were a child.

The poet and pagan shrugged his shoulders with a feeble imitation of his old bravado.

"I fear, Ferdinand," he said to himself—"I fear that you have lost a disciple. Your creed does not seem to be popular. However, you have done to-day what I suppose they would call a 'Christian deed.' *Ainsi soit.*"

He climbed once more up into the driver's seat.

"Where now, m'sieu'?" asked the driver stolidly.

"Where?" repeated the pagan. "Anywhere! Get me away from these Christians. They are weakening to a man's resolution. They sap his manliness. They appeal insidiously to the maudlin, sentimental side of his nature. Bah! That sun is very glaring, driver. Do you see how it makes my eyes water? Turn around and face the south, and flog your horse a little. What was it that King Agrippa said in their Bible? Ah, I have it now: 'Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.' Flog your horse, driver—flog your horse! I must get out of here. It is dangerous, I tell you—dangerous. Flog your horse, driver, and drive me to the south—to the south where the nereids are laughing and leaping and calling to one another across the waves of the far-resounding sea. Farewell, Diane—adieu. I go back alone to the gods."

Obediently the driver plied his whip, the horse broke into a heavy, swaying trot, the cart bounced and rattled over the cobblestones, and Ferdinand Taillandy, pagan and poet, became once more a wanderer on the face of the earth.

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Drawn by N. C. Wyeth.

Without a word he began to shoot.—Page 153.

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CHAVERO

By James B. Connolly

ILLUSTRATIONS, INCLUDING FRONTISPIECE, BY N. C. WYETH

I WAS on my way to the plaza for my morning cup of chocolate, when I met Luis Chavero. He pointed his cane to where, far out to sea, the smoke of many ships smudged the sky, and took from his shoulder a pair of glasses that I might have a better look.

It was a fleet of American war-ships; and to see them come steaming in—boiling white bows, trailing black stacks, and the afterflame and roar of their saluting battery, was perhaps, as Chavero phrased it—to put the fear of great guns into little countries.

Chavero's little country was Jenagua, and he was of the Nationals, who were then on top in Jenagua; and lying outside the reefs of Santa Cruz, as our fleet bowled in, was the *Orizaba*, with 50,000 rifles and 5,000,000 rounds of ammunition for the Nationals.

As American consul at Santa Cruz, I called, in proper time, on the flagship. Chavero, who took me out in his power-boat, would not come on deck with me. He preferred to tinker with the engine while he waited; also he was an amazingly shy, sensitive man who did not like to butt in on people.

The admiral wanted to know something of Jenaguan politics. What I could say was that the best of the Jenaguan leaders seemed to be of the Nationals. The rank and file did not always know what they were fighting for; but, honestly led, they would be a hard crowd to beat; at least, they did not seem to mind being killed.

"And probably won't," commented the admiral, "until they fall into fat ways of living. At least, that is how the historians have it. But this General Podesta of the Nationals—what of him?"

"Podesta"—it gave me some pleasure to say it—"is a grafter and a fake fighter, with a first-class publicity bureau to acquaint the public with what a great fellow he is."

My answer did not shock the admiral. I did not suppose it would. I already knew that Podesta had sent word that there would be no trouble—he would himself see to it that the *Orizaba* would not land her munitions of war.

"I was wondering," the admiral answered, "what sort of a patriot he could be—not to want to land a small-arms cargo for his army. But, so long as he is ready to make it easy for us, why, it would be foolish for us not to let him."

After I had done absorbing a smoke and swapping the more or less official gossip of war, and was on my way from the admiral's cabin, a mess-boy waylaid me to say that Mr. Chavero was in Mr. Trench's room, and would I call in there for him?

Chavero, it seems, had been waiting, unobtrusively as if he were my serving man, in the stern-sheets of his motor-boat, when Lieutenant Ned Trench spied him from the quarterdeck. Trench was a young officer whom I had also met before.

"If it isn't good old Luis Chavero!" cried Trench; and Chavero had to come aboard, and step down to the ward-room country for a drink. In those days it was still permissible for an officer to think of his ship as his home, and treat a guest accordingly.

"I suppose you know," said Trench, as I stepped in off the passageway, "that the señor here is the party who used to come down to the Navy School and clean us up regularly at fencing?"

I knew it; but it was his wife, not Chavero, who had told me. I knew that he had also done many other things while at school in the United States of which he did not boast.

At this point the mess-boy brought in the needful ingredients for a Navy cock-

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tail, and Gallord, a marine lieutenant, was for mixing it; but Trench waved him off. "You know, Gallie, that up home we never would allow everybody to mix a julep or a Christmas egg-nogg."

"That so?" retorted Gallord. "You take so much gin, so much vermouth, a dash of orange juice, plenty of cracked ice, throw 'em together, and shake. Where's the mystery?"

"The same that's in a silver sunrise, or in poetry. It's hard to explain, but it's there—and it gets you. Go 'way now and sit down, and maybe I'll let you shake and pour."

"Poetry!" howled Gallord. "Talk men's talk, Neddo." Gallord plainly was no dreamer under the moon, but one of the energetic kind who always wanted to be doing something. For one thing alone any mess should have been glad to have him: he was never afraid to thrash out an argument; he believed in getting to the bottom of things. He turned to Chavero now.

"Señor, you've been educated in God's country, married an American wife, seen things done right up to the handle in the United States—it's men like you ought to be educating 'em up to up-to-date methods down here. What's the matter with the people down here that they can't seem to govern themselves?"

"There must be a reason," persisted Gallord, when Chavero only smiled. "Don't tell me they are harder to break to harness. That's only talking it up for individualism, and that never gets any country anywhere. Team-work is the thing in this twentieth century. Don't mind my talking out, señor—somebody ought to tip 'em off down here to get together."

Trench, having properly mixed the cocktail, had passed Gallord the shaker; which Gallord now held high to explain one more thing before filling the glasses. "And there's that sniping, señor, if we land. Anybody not in uniform and firing a shot at us will be shot on the spot, if caught."

Luis nodded that he understood; but presently he also said: "And yet, if I recall my American history correctly, your men of Concord and Lexington were snipers?"

Gallord took one hand from the shaker to wave that argument out of the airport. "Oh, but that was different, señor! That——"

"Say, Gallie," interrupted Trench, "before you try to get any more of that stuff out of your system, some of us would like to ask what we left a cool awning topside for?"

"Huh—what? Oh-h!" Gallord finished his shaking and filled the little glasses. "Señor—and you, consul—no hard feelings, señor—glad to see you aboard."

"I am honored to be aboard," replied Chavero. "Mr. Gallord, Trench, gentlemen—I salute you!"

I stayed to dinner. They tried to get Chavero to stay to dinner, too. But he explained that he had shore business which he could not forego; and so they let him go.

I was hurried ashore from that dinner later by a cable from the press service which I sometimes served in emergencies. They wished to know how the arrival of our ships in Santa Cruz would affect the political situation in Jenagua.

Chavero, the wealthiest citizen and the most active National in that part of Jenagua, was of course the man to tell me. I called up his home, his club, and then his friend, Colonel Ramon, at the barracks. On Ramon's advice I called up the office of Aguirrez, Chavero's old family lawyer; there he was, and there I met him signing and sealing a legal paper which the lawyer's two clerks witnessed.

After we had left the lawyer's office I told Chavero exactly what I wanted to know, and why I wanted to know it. "First, the ammunition ship outside—are the Nationals going to land her cargo to-night?"

"And should we land it," he countered—"what will happen?"

"It is no secret—our ships will take Santa Cruz."

"Doubtless. And so General Podesta thinks of a certainty. You recollect the young Colonel Ramon?"

I recollected Ramon, the romantic. He was then in command of the National forces in Santa Cruz. I also recollected, which was doubtless what Chavero had in

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mind, the first night Chavero had pointed him out to me: Ramon disguised as a charcoal burner and sighing up to a girl in a balcony, she made up as her own maid. And so Ramon had come many a night to Santa Cruz before the Nationals had taken the city. But that was all past—they were now married and happy.

"What of Colonel Ramon?" I asked.

"Podesta has withdrawn three-fourths of Ramon's forces from Santa Cruz."

"But why?"

"Who knows!" Chavero had been smiling sardonically to himself all the way up the street. "Possibly there is a good reason," he said presently. "Colonel Ramon, as General Podesta well knows, is young, brave, headstrong; wherefore the general, great soul, to remove Ramon's last possible temptation to resist, only to-day said to him: 'Colonel, my comrade, you love your wife. You adore your child. They love and adore you. I would preserve you to them, and them to you. What is of more moment in this life than the happiness of our beloved? Colonel, my comrade,' he continues, 'do not land our supplies while the American war-ships are here. To do so may be your death, and then what becomes of your adored wife and little one? Do not; I beseech you, not as your commander, but as your friend—and the ice-making concession of Santa Cruz shall be yours when this war is over.' But we are here."

It was at his home we had arrived. Chavero's wife and boy were waiting for him. She was an invalid, and it was in the hope of benefiting her that Chavero had moved from the high mountain capital of Jenagua only the year before. The doctors then had it that the warm relaxing air of Santa Cruz, on the coast, would rest up her heart; but the last specialist who had come down from the capital held out no hope. Any severe shock might take her off, he said.

She was reclining in an extension chair when we entered, listening to the boy, who was reading a fairy-tale, making the English into Spanish as he read. It was notable that, although he was twelve years of age already, she talked nothing but Spanish to him; Chavero nothing but English. He was a fine boy—I had had many talks with him: an imaginative boy, with great dreams in his head. They, I knew, had great hopes for him.

They had been waiting up only to see him. They soon said good night to me. Chavero, bidding me wait, lifted her up and carried her up-stairs. The boy, in the native costume which his mother so liked to see him in, bounded on before them. Soon I could hear Chavero romping with the boy; after another interval I could hear Chavero singing a Jenaguan love-song to her.

She was an American girl who had come to Jenagua with misgivings, and had wound up by becoming an ardent Jenaguan, the not uncommon ending of Northerners who had come to Jenagua to live. Having known her people up home, I thought I could understand it. To the Jenaguan people, to deny natural and innocent emotions is a hypocrisy; and, in the case of pure affection, a cruelty. Chavero's wife was a normal human being who must have affection; or at least the expression of it. Chavero had loved her; and thereafter what he believed in she believed in—possibly believed more intensely than he.

Chavero returned; we went into the garden. It was his wife's hobby—the garden. When Chavero had first seen her, she was picking flowers in her father's garden, an incident never forgotten by her or him. It was a dream place, this Jenaguan garden: a little brook with silver fishes leaping under shaded lights; wonderful bushes borne down with brilliant flowers; hedges cut straight and level as a T-square.

"These forces of yours, Chavero—how will they fight?" I asked after a while. I was thinking only of Ramon's forces, and the near possibilities for Santa Cruz; but he plainly had in mind the forces of all Jenagua, and the future of the whole country.

"Fight?" he answered reproachfully. "What man will not fight if he must? As for these—but by this time you know them!"

I knew something of them: peons mostly, what we would call pick-and-shovel men at home, stout fellows who had been putting in ten and twelve hours a day of the heaviest toil under the hot

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sun for a paper peso a day. To them the game of war seemed a sort of diversion. And with plenty to eat, time to sleep, and the fighting just often enough to keep up the excitement—from their point of view, why shouldn't they? They might even have the comforts of home—bring along their women-folk to do the cooking and solace them in lonely hours. It was the life for a man! As for being killed? So is there a headache perhaps after a drink. The headache may come, but in the meantime the drink is good.

"It is true," resumed Chavero, "that they do not know too much of the world's affairs. And there is the pity—to mislead them when they are so trustful." He took another turn or two. "Listen, my friend. While I was yet at college, my good and wise father still alive, I met many men who desired only to be given a chance to fight. Some did not ask if the cause were good or bad—they did not care, so that it offered adventure. Such were quite often good fighters, but as likely later to be fighting against us. But some there were who wished to know that it was a good cause. If a losing cause, all the better. Such were the idealists—visionaries some called them—great fighting men. Such I tried to win to my cause.

"But the fighting was not the difficult matter for us. We were a trustful people. We were most slow to learn that there are such men as professional patriots, even as there are professional politicians, financiers, soldiers, even, I have found—I have so great difficulty to impress this upon Mrs. Chavero—professional churchmen. To women the robes of high station, even as to men the large words of demagogues, are enormously imposing.

"However, to proceed. Again and again the self-seekers sold us out. But in time we began to understand that to win, we must handle the self-seekers in a practical way. Podesta, a self-seeker always, is now ready to sell out."

"Sell out! To whom? Not to my country?"

"To your country?—no, my friend. I do not accuse your country. But there are people who will benefit immensely if your country takes over Jenagua. And mind you, my friend, I am one who believes that this entire northern continent shall in time become part of your country. But that time is not yet. For you now, for any country, to say to us, 'We are better fitted to govern you than are you yourselves,' that is but to impress us, not with your greatness, but with your self-sufficiency." He thought a moment; and then laughed softly. "It is not on the list of sins, self-sufficiency, but it should be. No, no, a nation, even as an individual, must fight her own way up to the light—no one may expiate for us our sins, even as no one should deny to us our virtues."

"That is all fine, Chavero, but if you attempt to land your munitions of war, we will take Santa Cruz—and how will you stop us?"

"My dear friend, we cannot stop you."

"And after Santa Cruz it may be all Jenagua we shall take."

"No, no, you will not—you would be ill-advised to attempt that. You know us. We have an army of men who can take a rifle, a bag of maize, a pair of straw sandals, and go forty, fifty, sixty miles a day over the mountain trails, stopping only here and there at the water-holes—and they know where every water-hole is. They go to battle as to a fiesta. True, they may not always go in uniform, but that will not make them less brave or less determined. An army of four hundred thousand men were needful to conquer the Boers. We are more numerous than the Boers, our country more difficult for strangers to campaign in."

"But we would finally conquer you?"

"Not conquer—crush. And surely your great country will not do that."

"But Podesta has ordered the supplies not to be landed?"

"But not in writing. Ramon wishes it in writing. If he will but give the order in writing, a copy of that order will be posted on every wall of Santa Cruz, and printed in every Nationalist newspaper in Jenagua within twenty-four hours. And then—p-s-st—Podesta would have to flee the country."

"Unless, of course, Ramon, a poor man, should get to thinking overmuch of the ice concession?"

"It is true," said Chavero gravely. "He is poor—the comfort of his wife and

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child mean everything to him. As he said to me at dinner to-night, 'It is grand to be a hero, but what becomes of one's wife and child?' An inspiring observation! and so, this very night, the matter was arranged. If Colonel Ramon dies in defense of Santa Cruz to-morrow, his wife and child, while they live, shall draw a pension equal to the ice-making concession. Is it not what you call in your country"—he smiled broadly—"practical politics?"

I knew then that it was the Chavero estate which would guarantee the pension, but I was more concerned with the Chavero of the morrow. I took his hand. "Chavero, you too have a wife and child. Remember what Gallord said to-day on the ship. You are not a soldier—do not mix up in any fighting."

"No? And yet—" with a shrug and a smile—"what a law, that a man must get into livery to defend his home or his country!"

I left him there, smiling up from a path in his garden to the wonderful stars.

That night, as all men know now, the munitions of war were landed from the *Orizaba;* when our people learned it, boat-loads of men were hurried ashore.

Lieutenant Trench commanded the first landing party. From the top of the steamship company's building I could see him marching his bluejackets along the water-front to the marine park between the custom-house and the harbor. He had a battery of field-pieces with him.

The war-supplies had been stored in the custom-house, and Trench's orders were to recapture them. Podesta had said that there would be no opposition and our people had banked on that; but while Trench was yet midway of the park Jenaguan riflemen showed at the windows and roof of the custom-house and fired a few shots, as if by warning, over his head.

Trench waved his men to lie flat. When they did so the riflemen disappeared. Trench then ordered an advance. Instantly the riflemen reappeared at windows and roof, and volleyed, but this time not over our fellows' heads. I could see the little jets of water thrown up in the morning sun where the Jenaguan bullets would strike in the park fountains; I could see pieces of small statuary begin to wabble, or suddenly go plunging off their pedestals to the asphalt walk.

It was a hot, sultry morning, and our men in heavy marching gear. They must have been lathered in sweat as they ran on. Sometimes one dropped.

Trench, I knew, would not stand for the loss of many of his men. I had sat beside him at dinner the evening before, and I knew that he held no feeling against these Jenaguans—in their place he would be firing, too; but the Jenaguan point of view had nothing to do with him now.

Trench waved his arm; and his field-pieces at once began shelling. The custom-house was a good-sized building; but of adobe mostly, stiffened up with brick partitions. I could see without glasses the hole torn by the first shell in the wall. No great harm in that; but when it exploded inside, it must have done harm. The second shell also exploded inside. I could tell that by the clouds of dust and bricks and plaster which came puffing through the windows.

They must have blotted them out by squads inside. After the second shell those who had been manning the windows began to tumble inward; some fell outside the walls. There were men in civilian clothes among them. When Trench's shell-fire ceased no windows were needed to look into that custom-house; and what men were left there must have been lying with the cases of war-stuff under the ruins.

After the custom-house went it took but little time to clean up the rest of the water-front. The Jenaguans had only rifles, and to meet a shell with a rifle is like throwing a pebble against a lightning-bolt; but after the water-front was cleaned up the job still remained of making sure that no armed Jenaguans remained within the city. Some, retreating stubbornly, had been seen to disappear into houses up-town; and so began the combing of Santa Cruz from cellar to roof.

Trench's shipmate, Gallord, was given a block on one side of the plaza to overhaul. To make a thorough job of it, he began with the house farthest from the plaza, starting with the street floor and going up through, taking room after room and floor after floor. From the roof of that house he went down through the next

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house and into the court in the rear. It was room after room, floor after floor, ground floor to roof, and so on, up and down, up and down, house after house.

Surprised men and woman within the houses protested, and sometimes had to be bundled out of the way. It was usually quietly done, with a question, a quick look around, and on their way again. Where doors would not open quickly they had of course to be forced; but there was little needless noise, or roughness; and above all no outrages.

So did Gallord and his men arrive at the second last house of this block; and, rushing from the top floor down, were greeted with a rifle-crack and a bullet from behind a closed door. One of his men dropped. Another crack and another dropped.

"Get him!" ordered Gallord. His men volleyed through the door; and again and again to his order. When they broke in the door the Jenaguan lay dead; but one of their own wounded men was already dead, and the other out of action for the day. Gallord left a guard for them, and hurried on.

It was a fine, large house, the next one. Beyond the patio wall they could see the clipped hedges; could smell, above the reek and sweat and red heat of the day, the fragrance of flowers. On any other occasion they would probably have entered softly, reverently, so plain was the evidence of peace and culture here where fountains were spurting, birds fluttering, and somewhere a woman's gentle voice calling. But they had just left a dead comrade, and no knowing when another might go the same way; so it was a rapid rush, with heads up, eyes about, bayonets fixed and finger on trigger, but for all their hurry making no noise.

Above a gorgeous bush an alert marine saw a conical high straw hat of the kind so often worn by the natives. "There's one—waiting for us! Look, sir—crouchin' behind that hedge!" exclaimed the marine.

Gallord saw the hat and thought of the dead comrade behind; and then the marine said huskily, "He's moving—shall I get him, sir!"

"Get him!" snapped Gallord. The marine fired. Three or four others fired with him. The hat dropped down out of sight.

A native Indian girl came running out of the house then. She raised her finger to her lips. "Sh-h—" she said, "sh-h—" and looked around. She called out some words in a low voice. There was no answer. She stood on her toes, looked around, and in the most mournful voice called again.

The marine who had first seen the hat was known to be good at Spanish. "What's she saying?" demanded Gallord.

The man looked at his officer; but made no other answer.

Gallord shook him. "You heard me! What did she say?"

"She was calling to some boy to come into the house—that his mother was dying. 'Twas him we shot!"

Gallord rushed around the hedge. "Good Christ!" he said—"let's get out of here!" It was a beautiful young boy they had killed—his arms full of flowers.

It was Chavero's boy who was killed by Gallord's men, and the boy's mother who died of the shock of it; and what the Jenaguan Nationalist papers said of it is not pleasant reading. What some of our people said later of Chavero—neither is that pleasant reading.

Some inescapable horrors of war are too often charged to the cruelty of the officers and men in it; even as the abnormal conduct of a man under a great strain is so often marked up as the evidence of a concealed wicked nature. Gallord was not a brute; nor were his men; no more than Chavero was the cold-blooded sniper so many of our people—good people too—set him down as being. Perhaps I have stretched this statement of the Santa Cruz affair overmuch to prove these things; but Chavero was my friend at the time, as Gallord became later.

Chavero came home that morning, after taking the dead body of Colonel Ramon from the ruins of the custom-house. He was covered with grime and plaster and blood, and warned his body-servant, who let him in, not to tell their mistress he had come until after he had cleaned and dressed up.

Chavero went straight to his room to clean up; and he was still at that business when they both, master and servant—this is the testimony of the body-servant

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later—heard the rifle-firing in the garden. It was not the firing; at even closer quarters—just outside Chavero's room in the plaza—there had been firing all day; but this terrifying silence that had all at once come over his house!

He hurried to finish his dressing; but did not finish it. Suddenly he broke off and bounded down-stairs; and found—what he found. After one long, silent look, he sent the servants from the room. They were hill Indians mostly, and now—they so told it afterward—they went without a word, crying only a little after a sight of their master's face.

The servants never agreed on how long their master was there; but ten, twenty, thirty minutes, whatever it was, he remained alone with his dead; when he reopened the door to them again, their mistress was laid out on a couch. The young master was lying beside her. A Jenaguan flag was laid across their breasts; and over this flag their hands were folded.

Chavero had a large armorer's case in the large hall; from that he took two automatic pistols, loaded them, and stepped onto the large balcony looking onto the plaza, where by now some hundreds of marines and bluejackets, having completed their house work, were standing or lying at ease. Chavero drooped a Jenaguan flag over the balcony rail and stood, a pistol in each hand and all in white—white trousers, white shirt, white shoes, no collar, no coat, no hat—no one in the plaza could overlook him. He was tall, too, with hair very black and very thick.

Without a word he began to shoot. He seemed to be aiming at no particular person; but his first shot went through the left shoulder of a marine eighty yards away; his second through the right lung of another marine beside him. By that time our men had leaped to their rifles. It was hardly more than a hundred yards across the plaza. They could not miss him; and they did not—a dozen men firing at once. But he held his feet until he had emptied both automatics.

I was in the plaza when this happened; and just as soon as I could get to him I did so. "Surely, friend, the boy should have been allowed to live," he said; and for some minutes I thought they were to be his last words. Then he almost smiled. "But in twenty-four hours Jenagua will be aflame. Whether the pretenders wish it or do not wish it, Jenagua! Jenagua! Jenagua! that must be their war-cry."

With that, and a wish that I would write his wife's people of how it happened, he passed away.

LASCA

By Edward C. Venable

Author of "Pierre Vinton"

ILLUSTRATION BY MAY WILSON PRESTON

"I AM fat!" wailed the diva.

"What if you are?" cried the manager. "You always were fat. You have been fat for fifteen years."

"I am fat!" wailed the diva. "I will not sing. They laugh at me."

"They weep! they cry!" amended Therese, clasping her hands and rolling her eyes toward the cornice. "They cry, 'Lasca! Lasca!' Besides," she added, "it is Wagner, and one is never too fat for Wagner."

"You lie!" said Madame Lasca. "Be silent! They laugh at me. I will not sing," she repeated in a tone of finality.

"Then," said the manager, "you break the contract and I'll put you in jail."

"It is a loathsome country," said the diva. "I had as soon be in jail."

The manager put on his high hat and looked out of the hotel window, where,

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fourteen stories below, Broadway roared along. The argument had lasted an hour and a half. He was getting old, he reflected; he was losing his hair and his patience.

"But," persisted Therese, who had lost neither, "madame is not fat. She has the figure of the matron; not the *jeune fille*—no, certainly, but the figure of the matron."

"You lie!" repeated her mistress; "be silent! I have two hundred pounds."

Therese repelled the suggestion with a shiver. The diva gave a sob and hid her head in the sofa-cushions.

Samuel Dietrich glanced contemptuously at the two hundred pounds on the cushions. He would have paid dearly for the power to execute his threat and put the lady in jail. She was determined to destroy, not his fortune—that was his plaything; not his reputation—that was his amusement—but his confidence in Samuel Dietrich, and that was his vital principle. He had pledged this that he would make New York listen to Wagner. The world had laughed; he had said nothing. He knew that New York did not listen to operas, but to prima donnas. He had imported Lasca to sing Wagner. New York would listen to Lasca and go away enchanted at having endured Wagner. Then he would laugh. But now, on the morning of the first performance, when Tristan's ship was set up on the boards, the house sold half-way to the top, when success was tickling the tips of his fingers, Lasca had announced her determination not to sing, because she was fat.

He looked at the prostrate soprano. She was enormous. "Fat!" he ejaculated. Then he checked down the expressive description of her figure that was on his lips.

"There can be but one reason for your not singing to-night," he said slowly; "that is because you are dead."

The diva's only answer was a kick delivered aimlessly in plain air as she lay on her face among the cushions. The manager dodged the kick and made to leave. Therese held the door as he passed through, and, with an expressive lift of her eyebrows, closed it upon him. A minute later she emerged into the hallway through another door, two rooms away. "M'sieu," she said in a low tone as she came up to him, "she will not sing."

"Why?"

She shook her head. "She will not sing," she repeated.

"What is it?" asked the manager; "have the newspapers laughed at her?"

"No, it is not the newspapers."

"Has she gained flesh lately?" he suggested.

"No," said Therese positively; "to the contrary, she has lost."

"Has she received any letters?"

"No," said Therese, "it is not the post."

He pushed his hat farther back on his head.

"Then, what is it?" he demanded.

"It is love," said Therese.

Samuel Dietrich was silent. He owed his success mostly to his clear perception of one truth: "In the world of art there are no such things as trifles." He did not laugh even at love.

He put his feet a little farther apart, and weighed his gold-headed cane carefully in his hands.

"Do you know?"

"M'sieu', I know."

"Who is it?"

"M'sieu', it is the *maître d'hôtel*, Pascal, down-stairs."

"Damnation!" He dropped the gold-headed cane with a bang. "Has the head waiter been making love to her?"

"M'sieu'," answered Therese, "Pascal has made love to her, and she has made love to Pascal, but it is all twenty years—in Paris."

Therese drew a little farther away from the door.

"She has not seen him here. She does not know where he is. She only knows that he sent her this." She put her hand beneath the bib of her apron, and drew forth an envelope. "This only. She knows no more than this. But I know, because I searched, that Pascal is head waiter down-stairs, and that he read madame's name on the register. He is a stupid, who knows nothing except what he reads in the hotel register. Madame received it last night. She did not sleep. I sat with her. She was—ah! so terribly

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Drawn by May Wilson Preston.

"Besides, it is Wagner, and one is never too fat for Wagner."—Page 153.

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agitated. She told me all. This morning she told me she would not sing."

Dietrich took the envelope and glanced at the contents. It was undated, and execrably written in French. He gave it back. "Read it to me," he asked.

"When you sing," Therese slowly translated, "among the hearers will be me. I can no more. Pascal."

"'When you sing,'" repeated the manager, "'among the hearers will be me'—is that all?"

"That is all, m'sieu'." She folded the paper, and put it back beneath her bib. Her voice trembled. "It is enough. She will not sing."

He shook his head dubiously.

"But why does she object to his hearing her sing?"

"Pardon, m'sieu'," interposed Therese, "but you do not comprehend correctly. Madame does not object to his hearing her sing, but madame believes that if he sees her fat he will think he has done wisely to run away with Madame Terrè."

If, at this crisis, Dietrich had been the dollar-branded soul his "artistes" described he would have been disgusted. If he had been the visionary spendthrift his rivals claimed, he would have been helpless. Fortunately, he was both. He faced the situation with the resource of an American financier and the imagination of a poet.

"So he did run away with Madame Terrè?" he inquired.

Therese nodded.

"He was the garçon in M'sieu' Terrè's cabaret in the Rue Mormantel," she explained. "Madame lived in the Rue Mormantel." She sighed and looked at the manager. Then, little by little, the story came out. Not the whole of it, because it was a rather pretty story, and, besides, nobody except Madame Lasca knew the whole of it, but enough of it to serve the somewhat mingled uses of Samuel Dietrich: the story of Mimi, in rags in the gutter, and Pascal, in a gleaming jacket on the *terrasse*, long ago in the old Rue Mormantel, now quite another street altogether; and also of the gleaming black eyes of Madame Terrè just inside the *terrasse* at the window; and of the till of M'sieu' Terrè filled with gold pieces. The eyes alone, perhaps—why, Pascal was a gay fellow, and used to such things; and, for the gold, he was an honest enough fellow, too; but together—it was too much. In short, Pascal and Madame Terrè and the till went to America.

"Pascal," observed the manager, "was a scoundrel."

Therese's face brightened. "Ah, yes, m'sieu', Pascal is a scoundrel," she responded eagerly. "But what matters it? Madame loved him. There are twenty years now, and she has not had a lover. She has grown famous, and noblemen have kissed her hand, but she has never had a lover, and now she is fat, and Pascal will have no—not even the regret. It is very sad."

Therese shook her head sadly. No "noblemen" had kissed her hand, but it was generally believed she had had lovers.

Dietrich took out his watch and noted the hands, for, having listened like a poet, he now began to think like an American financier.

"It is one o'clock. It would be best," he suggested, "that no one see Madame Lasca. Perhaps she cares to see no one. Above all, no men from newspapers."

"Certainly no!" replied Therese; "madame's orders are the same."

"But if the question is asked you whether madame is going to sing, say positively she will; that there is absolutely no doubt about it."

Therese nodded; her face cleared.

"M'sieu' has a plan, then?" she suggested.

But, instead of answering, "m'sieu'" rang for the lift; and Therese, unenlightened, returned to her disconsolate mistress.

Madame Lasca was designed by nature to create the most sublime emotions and the most ridiculous impression. Wallowing among the sofa-cushions was only one expression of an emotion, of which another expression might be the rôle of Isolde. There was no manner of perversity in her choice; she simply adopted the most convenient. At the time of her interview with her manager she adopted the sofa-cushions. She wallowed and wailed. It was grotesque, but, none the less, a genuine expression of madame's soul, which at the time was penetrated with anguish. Wagner would have been certainly a more beautiful expression, possibly a more satisfying one, but having

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made her choice she persisted, and lay among the sofa-cushions in dumb apathetic misery throughout the early afternoon.

She had given orders to Therese to pack. They would leave the unhappy country on the first steamer that could take them to Europe. Of course, this would involve the payment of a large compensation to the manager, but it mattered not. Nothing mattered to this divinely gifted woman except to preserve in the memory of her faithless head waiter the image of pretty young Mimi Maret, dancing and singing among the gutters of the Rue Mormantel, glorified as Madame Lasca, of the Grand Opera House of Munich. So long as that vision remained to haunt his memory, she felt that she was revenged. He could never be happy with the red-lipped shop-keeper's wife, however black her eyes might be, while such a glorious presentment of what he had thrown away remained to torture him. But, if this delusion should vanish, if, looking down from the gallery of the Metropolitan Opera, he saw a woman around whose waist the tenor's arms could not possibly meet, whose throat had sunk into her bosom, who waddled when she crossed from right to left, would such a vision remain? And more—would not Madame Terrè be there at his side to see that it did *not* remain?

Pascal had no soul to be ravished by music. He disliked music, except music of the can-can, of the Apache, of the Montmartre. All he would see would be a fat old woman making a hideous noise. With that she would leave him happy forever with the red-lipped, black-eyed Madame Terrè.

Rather than this she determined she would pay anything, suffer anything. Having resolved, she sank deeper among the cushions and wept afresh. Her triumph was bitter to the taste. She was old, she was fat, and it was only by flight she could conquer. This was the only triumph her genius could give. Poor Madame Lasca!

The entrance of Samuel Dietrich into his office that morning two hours after his usual time was not that of a man of business, of the cool, audacious, imperturbable genius who could gamble with fortunes and meanwhile hold true the balance between twenty warring jealousies, drive in team a dozen "temperaments." And, indeed, he was not that Samuel Dietrich at all. The poet, that element of his personality which cannot be too earnestly insisted upon, was in the ascendant. He was on fire, ablaze with inspiration. He drove from their chairs his half-dozen secretaries and stenographers, he dropped his hat on the floor, his gloves into the waste-basket. Then, falling into his chair, he seized a pen, and, alone with his inspiration, he composed.

MADAME:

I have wagered upon you my fortune and my reputation. You have failed me. I shall lose both. I know it, but I am resigned. I kiss your hands, and submit.

But it is not of myself and my misfortunes that I feel impelled to write you. I am, indeed, the chief sufferer from your mad caprice, but I am not the only one. There are others, and it is of one of them I am going to speak.

When I arrived here at my office after my interview with you, I found waiting for me two people, and perhaps nothing I can say can better impress upon you their condition than the fact that it has won them, without any claim of appointment, admission to my office, though my employees have been always most positively forbidden to allow such admissions. One of them is a woman [and here Samuel Dietrich leaned lower to his desk and seized a new pen]—a woman old, far past sixty, and very fat. But it is not of her I wish to speak—it is of her husband. He is very much younger, of a different class, I imagine, and, madame, totally blind. Remember that, madame, when I tell you that in that condition he has forced the woman who calls him her husband to bring him from the far West here to New York. And for what purpose? Ah! It is there I touch you. He claims that many years ago—in Paris, I believe—he knew you. He speaks of himself as Pascal and of a, I think, Terrè. No matter. I pay no heed to such stories, for what he has truly done is what I tell you. He has come that great distance, poor, blind, ill, to hear, madame, your voice.

Finding the house sold out, as you know it to be, he has appealed to me, winning, by the earnestness of his appeal and piti-

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fulness of his aspect, as I've written, admission to my private office.

Now, madame, if it were necessary that I should rebuild my opera-house, my friend should have a seat. I can see to it that he hears Isolde; but, madame, it is, as I must tell him, quite beyond my power to arrange that he should hear Lasca. That boon one only, madame, may confer.

And, so saying, I say, too, farewell.

Yours faithfully,

SAMUEL DIETRICH.

Sealed and directed, he despatched this letter by a clerk with the command never to return without an answer. Then, his inspiration exhausted, the poet satiated, he became once more the Samuel Dietrich of tradition, a suave, imperturbable gentleman with a high hat on a big desk.

The answer, when it came, was opened by him there. It was simply a sheet of hotel stationery once folded, unaddressed, and it bore the thumb-print of the messenger plain in one corner. Within, a black line, big, bold, and scarcely legible ran aslant the page, with a mighty flourish underneath, a line that was done at a stroke, but with a great blur in the middle of it. It read:

"I sing. Lasca."

"Of course you do," said Samuel Dietrich. And he carefully filed the line with the rest of the lady's correspondence, just next to her receipt for an advance payment of fifty-one thousand francs, less exchange.

Outside, in the foyer, the applause was muffled till it sounded like the rumble of distant artillery. Inside, he knew, the house was on its feet, on the seats, clinging to the railings of the boxes. Outside, the manager, sitting by the wall, softly smoothed the nap of his hat and smiled. He could not resist coming there to-night; there were some people in those boxes he especially wished to meet. So he sat and waited while the distant applause rolled and rumbled.

Presently the door of one of the boxes opened and a lady in brown furs came out, followed by a dapper little man with a gray beard.

"Oh, Dietrich," said the lady, coming forward, with both hands outstretched, "What a treat!"

"I say, Dietrich," said her companion over her shoulders, "that's not Lasca. I've heard Lasca, heard her two years ago in Munich, but not like this."

"To the best of my knowledge," replied the manager, "no one ever heard Lasca quite like this."

"What's happened to her?"

"She has grown—" began the manager.

"Exactly," said the lady with the sables; "grown, developed, expanded."

"Precisely," said the manager; "Madame Lasca has expanded."

The other doors were popping open now, one after another, and innumerable ladies with furs and dapper gentlemen crowded around. It was the hour of his triumph. He had not heard Lasca, he had been too busy, but he caught something of their enthusiasm.

"The greatest artist in Europe!"

"Inspired!"

A fat youth in a rumpled hat exclaimed: "Passion made divine!"

"Pooh!" thought the manager amid his congratulation. "It was only a blind head waiter in the top gallery, who wasn't even there."

Suddenly he felt his coat-sleeve tugged by some one in the press. He looked around; it was Therese.

"M'sieu,'" she panted. "I've looked everywhere for you. Madame sends you this. She says it is of all importance."

Samuel Dietrich took the letter she handed him and backed a little out of the congratulatory crowd. He could not resist the final touch.

"A moment"—he held up his hand. "I have a message from Madame Lasca."

The rumor ran the length of the foyer, and in an instant the most distant turned and looked, and, following the eyes of others, looked at Samuel Dietrich.

But it was not a note he held in his hand and stared at so queerly; it was a thick packet, an enclosure.

"Ah!" sighed the fat boy in the rumpled hat. "What would *I* give to read it!"

"What would I!" said the manager, "but unfortunately it is addressed to M. Pascal Dupin."

And, looking around at the beautiful ladies and the dapper gentlemen all about him, for the first time that day Samuel Dietrich felt ashamed of himself.

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SUPERDIRIGIBLE "GAMMA-I"

By Donn Byrne
Author of "Underseaboat F-33"

ILLUSTRATIONS BY F. C. YOHN

THE lights of Dunkirk slipped rearward, vibrating like a lantern at a ship's stern. They became a vague yellow splotch, like a hazy harvest moon; they became a dim halo, and narrowed down to an orange pin-point, like a smoker's match in a fog. Ypres showed southward in a pale aureole. Afar off the guns of Flanders thundered like drums.

Meriwell, as he leaned over the middle car of the dirigible, lowering his masked head to the wind, watched the black country skim by as if it were being pulled along by a rope. A spring wind cut past like a hurricane, and in it Meriwell could taste the sharp tang of gunpowder mingled with the scent of April flowers. Ypres flashed by beneath them and Cambrai rose like a star. The noise of the artillery discharges came nearer. It took on the heavy, booming tones of a March sea beating hollowly on cliffs.

"We're coming near the firing-line," Meriwell said to himself. "We ought to be rising now."

He glanced across to where the steersman stood cowled and rigid at his wheel, his slim, tall form suggested more than defined by the hooded electric lights. Beside him, poring over compass and map, his pale lawyer's face showing up like that of a hunting-bird, was the navigating lieutenant. In the shadows, leaning over the edge of the car, as a captain leans over his flying bridge, was the flight commander, old Colonel Sanderson. Meriwell glanced surreptitiously at his square-cut, tow-like beard and bowed engineer's shoulders. They seemed to droop more than ever to-night.

"Poor old skipper!" Meriwell muttered sympathetically.

The guns of the firing-line crashed into the air with heavy, shattering blasts. In the distance there showed the faint shadows of lights. Green shadows, that were lyddite; and infinitesimal pin-points of yellow, that were the flashes of rifles; and the pretty orange of shrapnel; and the blinding white of magnesium flares.

"Eighteen degrees up," the navigating lieutenant ordered. He watched his plumb-line while the steersman heaved on his switch. "Easy! Steady! Right-o!"

The floor of the car tilted like the deck of a steamer rising to the swell. The huge dirigible nosed her way upward like a mounting dragon-fly. They passed through a fleece of cloud that touched them caressingly like soft fingers. The noise of battle beneath them faded into a vibrating bass chord. The propellers purred like giant cats.

"She answered like a blood mare," said the navigator, pride ringing in his voice.

"If only my guns and bombs go as well as your planes," Meriwell told him, "I'll be satisfied."

"They will, never fear," the navigator laughed.

They were all proud of her, navigator, gunnery lieutenant, engineers, and crew. Full-fledged, like Minerva from the head of Jove, she had appeared from the tousled brain of the queer, misshapen Scotch engineer of the Clyde, who had come knocking at the door of the war-office when the slug-shaped Zeppelins were pouring fire on the heart of London and the British airmen were relying on frail, insufficient biplanes—sparrow-hawks competing with eagles. They had, thank God! trusted that little man with the Scots accent and the brier pipe, and here they had her now in the air, three hundred feet of her, a miracle of aluminum and gas and oiled silk, rigid, dependable, fleet as a bullet from a sharpshooter's piece. Meriwell studied her lines through the darkness with a throb of pride: her graceful length, like some wonderful

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night insect; the wide sweep of her planes, like a jinn's wings, the shelf-like horizontal ones to send her nosing upward like a hawk or to let her down in a gliding sea-gull's swoop, the vertical one like the rudder of a gigantic vessel; the three great baskets, attached to the keel with the trellised runway between them; the four propellers, humming like a nest of bees, two to the forward car, two to the aft; the platform above the many-jointed aluminum-covered balloons, with its emergency bridge and rapid-fire gun.

"We're up seven thousand feet," the navigating lieutenant grinned. "How do you like it?"

"Don't like it at all," Meriwell answered. His teeth were chattering.

"You'll like it less in a minute. I'm going up to ten."

The din of fighting below had vanished into a faint murmur and the flashing guns and flaming artillery had become small, flickering lights, like fireflies on an August night. Occasionally a cloud flicked past below them and shut off even the pinpoints of light. Here and there a group of stars showed, coldly lustrous, while southward toward Reims one fell sheer, like a bomb.

"I'd rather be shot than as cold as this," Meriwell grumbled. Beneath his leather suit and woollen mask his skin had become rough as sandpaper.

He looked about the car. The navigator stamped his feet and swung his arms with the cold. The steersman crouched low behind the wheel. Four of the crew huddled in blankets against the walls of the basket. Only the commander stood imperturbable and grim, looking into the night. The shaded electric bulbs threw a sickly yellow light over the mechanism of the dirigible; over the black signal-board, on which green, red, and white circles and triangles showed, messages to and from the engineers fore and aft; over the row of switches, like those in a railroad tower, that opened the cages beneath the cars to release the pear-shaped bombs; over the navigator's map and compass. They outlined dimly the machine gun that peered over each side swathed in their oilskin coverings. They drew strange, green glints from barometer and spirit-level, and made silver sparkles on the frost crystals that were forming, parallelogram on parallelogram and triangle on triangle, among the twisted riggings of the car.

"What time is it?" Meriwell asked.

"It's ten-thirty," the navigator jerked. "We'll make Mainz by two and be back about dawn."

The cold became more dry and piercing. It seemed to ooze in at the pores and mingle with the blood and compose itself into a mixture that chilled flesh and bone. Meriwell felt his limbs going numb. The countryside beneath was becoming darker. There were no longer great chandeliers of light to show towns and small clusters that were villages. To the left a faint geometrical array of arc lamps rose dimly. The navigator crossed to the side of the car and looked at it for a moment. He shook his head grimly. Meriwell knew it was Brussels. A cloud enveloped them and dashed them with particles of dew that were like a shower of frost. Through the thick spray the figures of the steersman and commander loomed up gigantically, like visitors from another world showing vaguely through a misty dawn.

There was something eerie, Meriwell thought, in the immobility of the commander. He should have shown more eagerness, more of a sense of satisfied ambition. For years the old engineer officer had lived in the hope of seeing England recapture her lead in the aviation of the world. He had worked night and day in his laboratory, testing gases, testing metals, working out models for a battleship of the air that would thrust aside the Zeppelin and the Schutte-Laenze as the steamer put aside the barkentine. And now to-night he was commanding his dream for the first time in action. He was to raid the great railway network of Mainz, over which German corps were entraining night and day for the last supreme effort to gain the coast towns. In two hours he would be tearing the mighty terminal to shreds of twisted rails and charred wood, and distorted lumps of iron that had once been panting locomotives. Meriwell was proud to be with him, and the commander should be proudest of all. The gunner remembered how the old man had pleaded

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for the detail. The chief of staff had argued he was too old; he was too valuable. The chief had had in mind a thing Meriwell had forgotten and which suddenly came back to him with stunning force. But the old aviator had won.

"The old sportsman!" Meriwell said to himself, and his throat choked with pride; "the great old sportsman!"

He remembered how, on the first raid of the leprous-white Zepplins from over the channel, the first house to be struck was the house of the old commander, a square, uncompromising, soldier-like house on Notting Hill, where his wife—the gray-haired, motherly lady with the dignified eyes—dwelt, and his widow daughter, mourning her husband dead somewhere in France. His soldier son, of the Sherwood Foresters, home on leave, was sleeping at the time. There were heard the high whir of propellers and the desultory crashing of anti-aircraft guns. Then, accurate as a thunderbolt, the great pear-shaped bomb had dropped, with the crash of lightning striking a tree. A colleague of the Royal Artillery, a blunt old fighter, with a cropped gray mustache, had told him about it, tactfully, laconically, with a fighter's sympathy. He told him how the gray-haired lady had died—very dignified, as she had been in life; very peaceful, as befitted an upright gentlewoman, her calm features mercifully unmarked. He stumbled as he spoke of the young captain, for a soldier should die on the battle-field, with guns roaring and his men about him, instead of being potted like a rat in a cornstack. When he came to the daughter his face diffused to purple and his gray eyes flashed.

"Curse them!" he swore viciously, "curse them night, noon, and morning! living and dead! the rotten gallows-birds!"

"That's all right, Carter," the aviator had said. "Thank you for telling me." And he had walked off, fumbling pitifully at his sword-belt. What black hairs he had left had turned white since then, and his gray eyes were more sunken, but his beard jutted savagely since, and his voice snapped commands to his airmen with a ring like that of steel.

"I wish we were over that railway station," said Meriwell to himself, grimly. He squinted across at the switches of the bomb-cages and at the silent machine guns in their oilskin swathings. "He's going to get some good work in to-night, if I can help."

The officer at the compass straightened suddenly. He punched at the indicator buttons in a quick burst of energy.

"Up planes," he shouted. "Nine degrees down."

"Nine down!" the steersman repeated. He heaved on his switch with a long, graceful pull. The notches clicked successively like a clock in winding. The car tilted forward gradually. Meriwell grasped at a support to keep himself from sliding. Wind flew against them in a strong upward sweep. The steersman braced to his wheel like a wrestler. The propellers purred less loudly. Meriwell had the sensation of being gently pulled downward. He looked over the side of the car fearfully. A few desultory lights showed dimly, like the lamps of a train in the distance. An engineer officer dropped into the car from the passage, electric torch in one hand and oil-can in the other. He reeked pungently of gasolene.

"Time you were going down," he remarked peevishly to the navigating lieutenant in strong Scots. "Do you want all my engines to freeze?"

"It'll be hot enough pretty soon," the navigator jeered at him.

"Where are we?" Meriwell asked.

"South of Maastricht," the lieutenant answered. He was as excited as a schoolboy. "We'll be over the border in a minute." He leaned toward the wind-gauge. "Doing seventy-two miles an hour," he shouted after the engineer.

It was warmer now. Meriwell glanced at the scale beside the barometer and saw it registered two thousand five hundred feet. Vague, clean scents stole through the wind—the white odor of hawthorn and the freshness of spring grass and early flowers, and the transparent odor of the wind, like the transparent taste of water. Sounds rose vaguely into the air—the shadows of sounds, it seemed—the baying of an uneasy dog and the twitter of startled birds. An automobile-horn screamed raucously and somewhere there was the cutting whistle of a train. As he leaned over the side of

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the car, the gunnery lieutenant saw the sparsely lighted land slip away beneath them as a pier slips away from a liner. Occasionally there was a brightly lighted municipal building; occasionally a microscopic point that Meriwell felt was a man with a lantern. Here and there a forge licked like flames on a volcano—a mute suggestion of war in which labor ceased neither night nor day. Afar off a flashing line of lights, like the lighted fuse of a crude mine, showed a train speeding. Meriwell felt himself looking at these things as a disembodied spirit might—the last odor and sound and sight of an earth that years of dwelling in had invested with a great affection. He felt himself shiver.

He moved slightly against the edge of the car, and as he did he discovered, with a sense of shock, that his hand had grasped the rail so tightly that he could hardly move it. The horrible intent nervousness that airmen know was lapping itself about him. He felt a wild desire to find himself on earth again, so wild that he had to clinch his teeth to prevent himself from jumping over the side of the car. He was suddenly conscious of his nerves—they seemed to spread all over his body like the veins of an ivy leaf, to be writhing, to be crying at his finger-tips. A great fear came on him, as it might come on a man swimming in the ocean far from sight of land or sail. They had no right to be there, he said to himself fiercely, no right to be high among the winds. They were intruders, impertinently encroaching on the domain of some Power whose inalienable domain the air was. They might irritate It, who had placed them on the earth to walk with feet on it and not above it to fly with wings. At any moment it might arise and smite their meagre human device of gas and steel as a man might smash a fly on the wall. He cowered suddenly, as if expecting a blow.

A faint exhalation of pale light showed to the northeast like a phosphorescent cloud—Aix-la-Chapelle! So they were over the border at last! Meriwell's teeth set and his eyes glinted. A sense of danger seized him, and suddenly there began running in his head the full sonorous rhythm of the "Watch upon the Rhine." They were over the iron wall at last, over the impregnable ring of steel. In spite of singing, in spite of all boasting—and as he felt his blood pulse proudly another chilling terror came over him. He felt as if the souls of all the dead fighters of the empire were rising up against them in a vast current of wings, Saxon men and Prussian and Hessian, soldiers of Bavaria and of Würtemberg, levies of the Hansa towns—striking at the steel bird with ineffectual, spiritual fingers, clinging pathetically to rigging and nacelle and plane, gazing hatefully at the invaders with horrible, bloodshot, unbodily eyes. . . .

The navigator turned suddenly to the man at the wheel.

"What the deuce is wrong with you?" he raged. "Starboard, I said. Starboard!"

The steersman bent to the wheel. He tugged and pushed until the veins stood out on his forehead like ropes.

"Can't do anything, sir," he stammered, "I'm jammed."

The navigator jumped to the signal-board. He snapped switches like fingers cracking. He leaned into the shelter-box of the speaking-tube.

"Cut off," he shouted, "the rudder's jammed. Engineer-lieutenant amidships!"

The hum of the propellers died away musically. The dirigible glided easily like a bird volplaning. There was the shuffle of feet along the metal-latticed passage. The dour Scots lieutenant dropped into the car, cotton waste in one hand and oil-can in the other. His second, a bright-cheeked Suffolk lad, leaped agilely after him.

"Oil on the hinges all evaporated—with your seventy-two miles an hour," the lieutenant snapped at the navigator. "I'll go aft and oil up."

"I'll do that," the second urged. He caught at the oil-can and plucked his torch from its scabbard. They heard him patter aft in the rear car. They saw his light flicker for an instant as he swung into the rigging. The Scotsman looked after him with an affectionate eye.

"A fine lad!" he murmured, "and a fine nerve he has!"

As he looked over the rail of the nacelle

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Meriwell saw the earth swing beneath him gently like a cradle rocking. The swaying lights gave him a sense of dizziness. He felt suddenly that the earth was a small thing, bowling through space like a tossed ball.

"Right!" he heard the engineer second hail faintly.

"Right-o!" came the cheery call of the navigator.

He watched the light of the boy's torch as he crept along the rigging to the main car. He heard him bandy a hearty word with somebody. He heard a gruff word of caution, a laugh, and a choked scream. Meriwell sprang to his full height and grasped the rail with both hands. He saw the flicker of the shadow as it plunged downward.

"My God!" he blurted. "He's gone!"

The navigator rushed to the side of the car like a maniac. The steersman half-turned from the wheel. The engineer officer stiffened like a pointing dog.

"He's gone!" the navigator said stupidly. "Poor Conroy's gone!"

They stood a moment silent, looking at each other in white horror. The commander came out of the shadows. He took his peaked cap off.

"God be good to a gallant officer!" he said.

"Amen!" Meriwell answered.

The engineer strode forward silently through the passage. The commander touched the navigating officer on the arm.

"Ahead, Mr. Brennan," he said simply.

The navigator caught up his tube.

"Full ahead," he ordered. He turned to the steersman. "Southeast by east," he directed.

"Southeast by east," the steersman repeated mechanically. The propellers throbbed, whirred, hummed. The night air cut against them like a whip. A lone star showed up for a moment in a break of cloud, and then disappeared again, as a stage disappears between closing curtains.

Meriwell felt dazed. War—this wasn't war! This was a puny fooling with the engines of destiny, children pulling the triggers of firearms. He remembered how a great-uncle of his had died at Balaklava: a bright morning with the battle-drums beating; guns pealing, soldiers cheering; Cardigan riding gallantly at the head of the Light Brigade. *Pro patria mori!* Yes—but to fall two thousand feet in the night-time and to strike an alien ground with a sickening thud—that was not war. That was horror. He remembered inconsequently how he had heard that a man would be dead before he struck the ground and the thought consoled him somewhat.

Stollberg slipped past dreamily in a murk, Lamersdorf, Blankenheim, Adenau and Honningen. Carts rattled as they flashed over Dumpelfeld. At Naub an alert sentry fired his Mauser, a whip's crack and a bullet's futile ping. Coblenz flitted past and they were over the Rhine, black, undulating, reflecting mistily the lamps of unsleeping barges. They swung over Wiesbaden, and Mainz came toward them, ambling like a man into ambush. The dirigible tilted upward at an angle of thirty. Meriwell sprang to the centre of the car. The commander climbed forward.

"Remember," he warned. "Not a second to waste!"

Doubt and nervousness dropped from Meriwell like a cloak. His brain sprang into action like a boxer's muscles at the call of the gong. He clambered forward along the passage toward the first car. Already the gun crew had stripped the covers from the machine guns. Men stood alongside the rails with queer umbrella-like things in their hands—the asbestos parachutes, with their naphtha-soaked torch in the handle, flares that would light up every cranny in the ground beneath and protect the dirigible from the light of the flares themselves.

"Ready, gunner?" asked the navigating lieutenant.

"Ready," Meriwell sang back.

They swung toward the town easily as a ship comes to its pier. Beneath them they could see the lights of the railroad station, big violet globes that radiated like stars. Men hurried to and fro along the concrete platforms—queer, squat, huddled figures. Two engines fussed in and out like busy housewives. In one corner was a massed city of railroad-cars. Rails shone in a bewildering intricacy like a metal puzzle. Long, lank sheds showed like barns.

"Ease up," the commander ordered.

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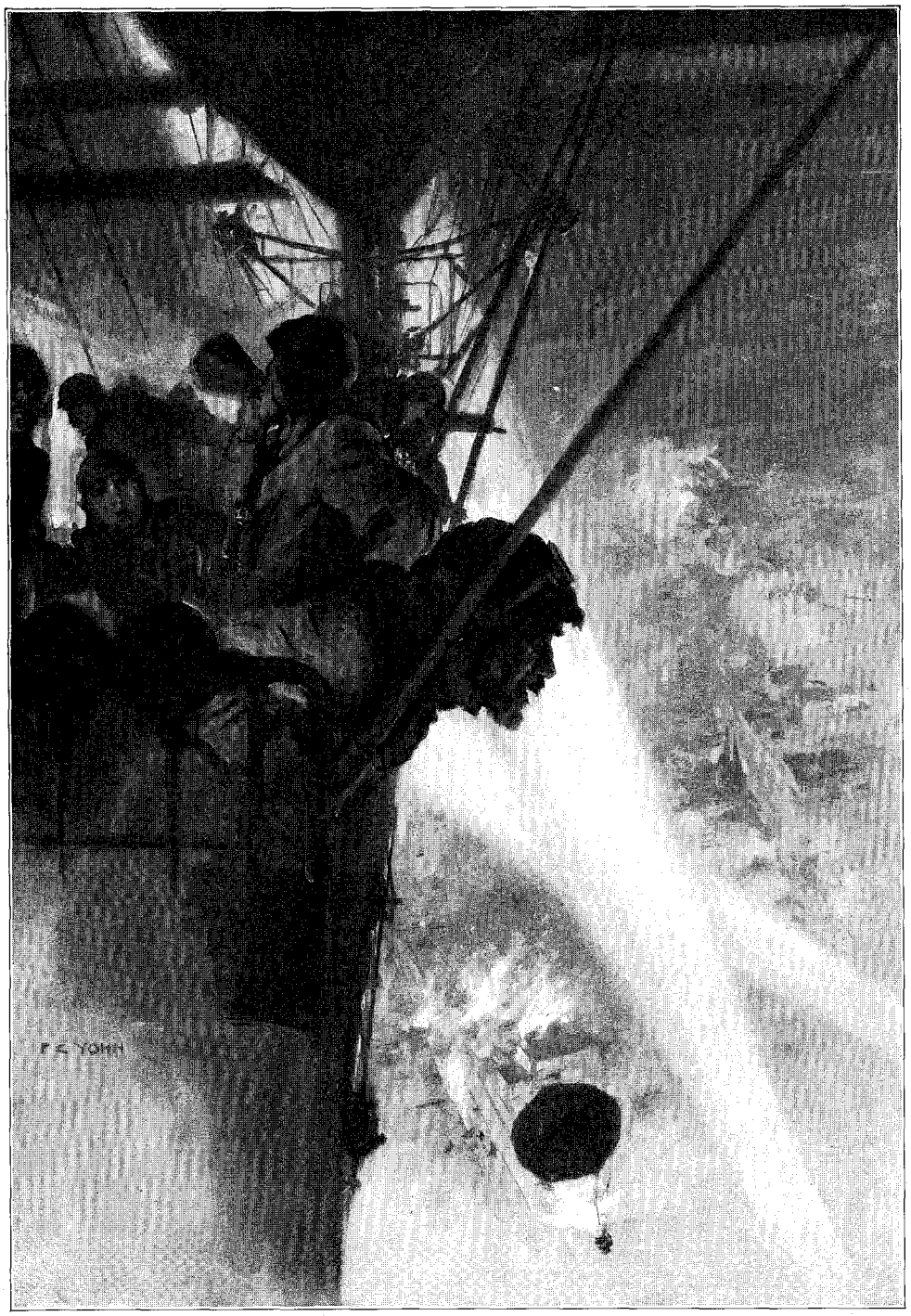

Drawn by F. C. Yohn.

"Sections A and B, lanyards 3 and 4, 'fore and aft," he bellowed. "Heave on!"—Page 166.

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He stood square in the centre of the car, his beard jutting, his hands thrust deep in his pockets. It was as if some main nerve had suddenly come into play, electrifying the great steel vessel. The navigator sprang to the speaking-tube.

"Cut off," he shouted. He thrust the steersman away from the wheel and caught at the spokes. "Figure of eight," he muttered. The dirigible swung gracefully in a curve leftward. Meriwell looked over the side again and raised his night-glasses. On the platforms beneath men were running to and fro excitedly. As they looked upward they had the appearance of a child's tin soldiers gazing fearsomely at a human being. A whistle cut metallically into the air. A carbine cracked. A search-light shot skyward in a broad ribbon of white and began casting about like a fisherman's line. Somewhere there was a thudding boom, a whining scream, and a white star opened like a flower three hundred yards away with a crash like wood breaking.

"Go ahead, Mr. Meriwell," the commander directed.

Meriwell raised his megaphone to his lips.

"Overboard, the parachutes," he thundered.

There was a burst of murky, yellow flame fore and aft. Six flaming torches floated downward like snowflakes falling. The town cowered darkly to the rear of them. Beneath, to the right, the station showed as if lit up by some great conflagration. Above, everything seemed to have gone grotesquely black. Meriwell could hardly see across the car. Another search-light leaped into the air and crossed the first one. They stabbed about like the tentacles of an octopus. The anti-aircraft guns shot six white stars to port in rapid succession like revolver shots. Along the concrete platforms a brace of sharpshooters dropped to their knees and cuddled their pieces to their cheeks. The dirigible moved with easy dignity toward the station. Meriwell calculated a moment. The bombs in the fall would carry forward in the direction the dirigible was headed for. He would have to wait a moment. Weights, distance, heights, flashed through his head like the dots and dashes of a Morse code.

"Sections A and B, lanyards 3 and 4, 'fore and aft," he bellowed. "Heave on!"

The dirigible shivered and jumped like a restive horse as the gunners heaved on their switches and the weighted bombs dropped from their cages. A search-light caught the great hawk for a moment and showed it gray and lustrous like a battleship at sea. The navigator swung his wheel about with a jerk. The dirigible turned like a hare. The propellers burst into a wild, spasmodic hum. They oscillated dangerously. Meriwell clung onto the side and looked over.

Eight great splotches of red flame burst suddenly on the ground, sideways, like water splashing. They showed red and angry like a man's wound. There were dark streaks among them—earth thrown up, men, metal, concrete. A puff of hot wind struck the car, and a vast unspeakable noise, a maddened, crashing roar, like the earth protesting at being attacked—a shuddering, horrible thing that drowned the feeble crackling of the guns and seemed to blot out life itself for a moment. The dirigible shivered like a feather in a gully of wind.

"Ease up," he called to the navigator. "A and B, lanyards 2 and 5, fore and aft," he roared again. Again the jump and curvet of the car; the red cup-like explosions, the terror of sound. A gun boomed southward, and something passed them with a high shriek. The search-light caught them again and hung on with the tenacity of a bulldog. Something like a fly appeared in the west.

"Look out," the commander warned the lieutenant at the wheel. "Get ready to rise."

Meriwell looked downward again with his glasses. The naphtha planes were approaching the junction on their drop and were lighting up the scene with a lurid Satanic glow. The glasses nearly slipped from his hands. Beneath him was chaos. The glittering rails, the compact platforms, the lank sheds, the massed cars, the violet lights were no longer there. The terminal showed like a ploughed field—a wilderness of stone and earth, of twisted metal and shattered wood. Great chasms showed where the bombs had struck; little hillocks of thrown-up earth; great iron pillars broken in two like

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match-wood; huddled figures that had been soldiers on the platform; while from the massed cars and the long sheds great waves of red and blackish flame showed with foam tops of rolling brown smoke, rolling, licking, crackling, roaring, like a mediæval dream of hell.

"I don't need section C," he laughed. All the havoc had been wrought by the light bombs. There were still eight mammoth pears in their cages, unused. He could save those.

"Get the bridge now, Mr. Meriwell," the commander instructed, "and swing around to the forts."

"Empty ballast," roared the navigator.

There was a gurgle as the stop-cocks on the water-tanks of the keel were opened—a hollow rushing that should have ended in a splash. In the glaring light the water poured downward in two great streams fore and aft like silver cables falling. The dirigible rose as if drawn upward. Bombs burst like firecrackers. Beneath, the fire rustled like crushed paper and exploded now and then, in queer, hollow, inadequate sounds. The navigator swung over the river. Four thousand feet below the bridge showed over the black ribbon of the Rhine like a plank over a rivulet. Meriwell watched it with the eye of a cat ready to spring on a mouse.

"Ready on section C," he warned, "lanyards 2 and 3, fore and aft."

They floated along hazily, like a stick along a river. The anti-aircraft guns broke into a passion of whipping reports. The search-lights cut into the air like thrusting bayonets.

"Heave on!" he yelled suddenly.

The dirigible lifted violently like a canoe struck by a great wave. There was a loud whirring in the air as the bombs dropped downward. Meriwell felt his heart jump to his mouth. He peered over the edge breathlessly, his hands gripping the rail with sudden fear. Mechanically he opened his mouth to protect his ear-drums from the report, and as he did a vast wave of orange flame, like discolored sheet lightning, seemed to flick along the river. For a moment, soundless, the river rose in its bed as if struck by a mighty hand. The great stone bridge disappeared as if kicked away.

"My God!" said Meriwell hoarsely, "my God!"

Then suddenly noise struck him between the shoulder-blades, noise such as he could hardly believe possible—an infinitude of sound that rocked him like a crashing blow, a sound as of two planets meeting in mid-course, a gigantic forbidden thing, that only gods should make.

"The bridge is gone," said Meriwell stupidly.

A great hush swung over the town. The anti-aircraft guns stuttered and died. The futile rifle fire stopped. The thunder of the forts was cut off in mid-air. Only the blaze at the junction roared a little like a forced draft. Over the river all was black. The water had shut off the flare of the explosion. The search-light struck the ballonet of the dirigible as a spear strikes a fish. There was the throb of propellers.

"Triplane to starboard," the navigator warned.

"Send him down, Mr. Meriwell," the commander ordered calmly. "Navigator, put the men by the engines ready to start on the word."

The triplane rose jerkily in the air like a toy at the end of a string. Its three shelf-like planes showed dimly and vaguely like a great kite. Meriwell felt sorry for it—it was a game, chivalrous thing, to rise in the air to give battle to the leviathan. He felt a great throb of sympathy and sorrow for it. It looked such a puny thing—but he mustn't let it get above him, or alongside him——

"Search-light on starboard gun," he snapped.

A sergeant and corporal sprang to the Maxim. They clamped a thing like an automobile-lamp to the barrel. They snapped a switch, and a line of light shot out like a harpoon. It whipped about like a fencer's blade, parrying, thrusting, lifting, dropping. The corporal threw his leg over the saddle and caught the trigger.

"When you see her, fire!" Meriwell ordered.

She showed up for a moment, black and fragile, and motionless it seemed. The gun broke into an infuriated chatter. The cartridge-tape leaped like a hooked eel. Suddenly they saw the great kite twist like a wounded bird. It dropped in a

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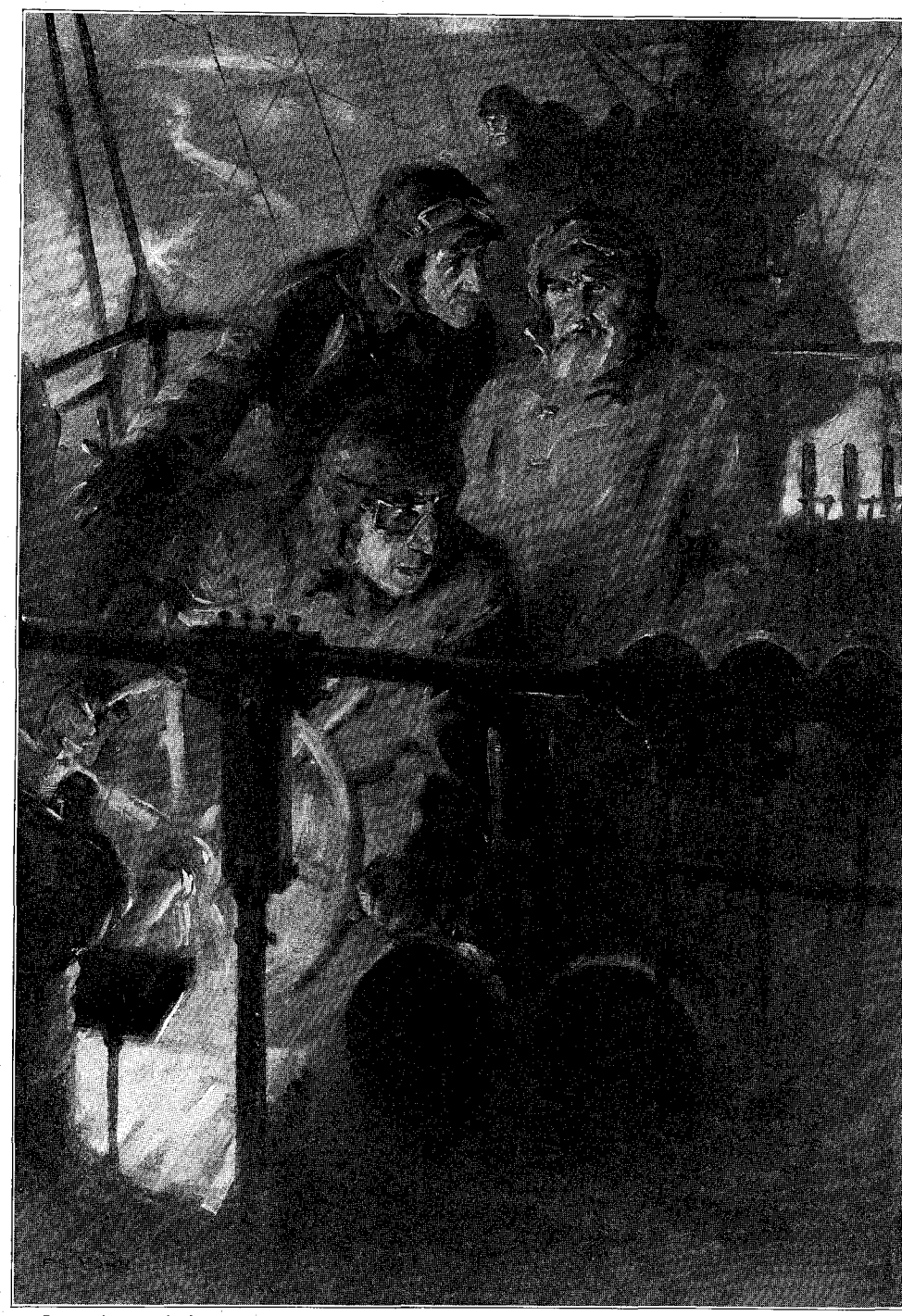

Drawn by F. C. Yohn.

"You can't do that!" he shouted in horror. "You can't fire on civilians."—Page 169.

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wavering zigzag while two black pinpoints dropped in plumb-lines.

"God help them!" Meriwell breathed.

The propellers of the dirigible plunged into their loud whir like the first peal of an organ. Meriwell staggered and lurched. The dirigible shot forward like a stone from a sling. The commander fell to pacing the car nervously. His fingers cracked like castanets. His beard twitched. He turned on the gunner.

"Never mind the forts," he shouted. "We've done enough. What have you left?"

"Sixteen small and four large bombs," Meriwell answered.

"Get ready," he warned. He turned to the navigator. "Back and over the town."

"Back and over the town?" the navigator queried stupidly. "Over the town?"

"Yes," the commander barked. His face seemed queerly white and strained. "Let them have all you've got, Mr. Meriwell."

"You don't mean—?" Meriwell nearly laughed in amazement. "Bombard the town?"

"Yes. Quick. Circle around and let go."

A great, tawny lake of flame poured over the acreage of cars in the junction. It lighted the town dully and they could see it hazily, through a smoke screen, as it were. The narrow Gothic buildings showed up as in a painting; the peaceful cathedral; the great, squat municipal hall; the queer dolls' houses—it all seemed like a theatrical spectacle. Southward the gunners still threw their white stars and the artillery of the forts stabbed red and blindly into the murky fog.

"Take the wheel," the navigator told the steersman. "Planes up eighteen and swing in a circle." He looked at the commander with grave, disquieted eyes.

Meriwell caught at the commander's sleeve.

"My God, sir! You can't do that!" he shouted in horror. "You can't fire on civilians."

"I can," said the old man doggedly. "I can and I will."

"You're mad, sir! You're mad!" he babbled.

A stray shot cut screaming past them. They rocked from the current. The crew moved about the car uneasily.

"Bring her around," the commander ordered. The navigator never moved.

A vast desire to throw himself on the old commander came on Meriwell, to bind him hand and foot. He must have gone crazy, he judged. That last terrific explosion had injured his brain. Then suddenly he remembered the house on Notting Hill, the white-haired lady who had died on the night raid, the screaming, distraught daughter, the gallant captain of Sherwood Foresters killed like a rat in a trap. He understood.

"I can't do it, sir," the navigator replied.

Meriwell took a step toward him. His hands went out pleadingly.

"I know, sir. I understand. But we can't do it. I won't give the order and the men wouldn't pull the lanyards," his voice stumbled. "We're soldiers," he continued, "and we're fighting soldiers—not unarmed men, not sleeping children, not women."

There was a moment's silence. The wind blew about them as from a great blast-pipe. The reports of the air-guns ceased for a moment and began intermittently. The navigator turned his head away. Meriwell looked at the commander's white face.

"Soldiers!" he repeated. "Clean fighters. Soldiers and gentlemen. Officers and gentlemen, as your son was. And your wife was a soldier's wife and your daughter was a soldier's daughter."

He waved his hand toward the town.

"We've smashed the junction and smashed the bridge. No train will pass that way again and no ship will come up the Rhine. We've done our work—and not a building outside injured and not a civilian attacked. They'd be proud of that, your people, sir. You can't do this other thing, sir. It isn't the game. It isn't cricket."

He watched the commander's face keenly. He waited until he saw the bitter twist pass from the mouth and the frown go out of his eyes.

"They wouldn't want that," he urged. "They'd be ashamed, those people of yours." He waited a moment. "The old code, sir, an officer and a gentleman."

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The commander's head drooped a little. The stiff poise of his gray beard softened. His shoulders lost their tenseness suddenly.

"I—I—" he wavered. He turned to the navigator. "Right about and back," he said weakly. He slipped into the rear among the shadows.

The navigator sprang to his compass.

"Nor'west by west," he ordered.

"Nor'west by west," the steersman repeated mechanically.

And as Meriwell leaned over the car he saw the town race flatly away from them, while the guns still chattered viciously, like disturbed magpies, and their charges burst high in the air into pretty, artificial stars.

A BOMB-THROWER IN THE TRENCHES

BY LIEUTENANT Z OF THE BRITISH ARMY

THESE letters are written from the trenches by an Englishman who enlisted as a trooper in one of the new cavalry regiments at the outbreak of the war. His regiment remained in camp in England all winter, and when spring came and there was still no need for cavalry, they volunteered dismounted and were sent immediately to Flanders. There he joined the Bombing Squad, or "Suicide Club," as it is called in trench vernacular, and was twice promoted for bravery, finally being offered a commission in his regiment. Most of these letters (begun in the July number) are written to his sister in England, others to friends in America.

II

IN BELGIUM. 7 *July* 1915.

DEAR I:

Am just out of front trenches this morning early. This evening, for I slept all day, Major —— asked me if I would accept a commission in the regiment, if offered me. I told him would be proud to do so; so he said he would send in my name. Later I went before the Adjutant who took my name, age and nearest relative in the Army. I gave age as 41, and I gave him J's name as Colonel of —— Horse.

So please write to J. at once and explain. It is fine to have the offer come to one, without ever having pushed for it.

More news. Not so good. —— was wounded again, early this morning leaving the trenches, by a sniper, and a man was killed at the same time near him. He is not badly hurt, shot in upper thigh, with no bone injured.

I may have to come back home to train a bit. That, I do not know as yet. Will write more fully about doings in trenches the last few days, but think I got the offer for crawling out towards German lines, and setting bomb traps for Fritz when he goes a-sniping.

Are in reserve dugouts for three days more, then to the village behind for four days, then back to front trenches for four days and so on.

IN BELGIUM. Sunday. 11 *July* 1915.

DEAR I:

We are back in the village we recently left to go to the front trenches. Not in the same quarters because the Huns have been shelled unmercifully since we last left. So we are more on the outskirts. A number of children and women, some of whom we knew have been wounded and battered about. The front trenches allotted to us lie at the point of an apex, a salient, allowing a good amount of German cross-firing to take place; this, and a multitude of snipers make life highly exciting. Bullets came, almost from any direction, both spent ones and the vicious snappy kind. We left the trenches at dawn of the 7th, Wednesday last, after four days and six nights up there. From the trenches we went to the reserve dug-

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outs, which are just outside the long communication trench leading to the firing line, and we stayed there four days till we came here last night. We shall stay four days, and then go up to the front trenches to begin the round again. The reserve dugouts are just badger-holes into which you crawl on your hands and knees. They are literally holes in the ground, for two men at a time. You cannot sit up in them at all upright, and they are roofed with sand bags on poles, with earth on top, ending up with a layer of grass. As they are dug irregularly and show molelike mounds the whole affair is like a prairie-dog town on a big scale; men sitting at their holes popping in or popping out. All day bullets lop over at odd intervals, and only one man was actually hit here, and that was through the ankle. When you go to wash at a farm house close by you have to follow a hedge closely, and risk a bullet when you cross the road twice each way. During our four days in the front trenches we had about fifteen casualties, two being killed, and all sniper and stray bullet work. The night before last the Brigade bombers, about forty of us, went up to the front trench, where it is nearest the Hun, in readiness and bristling with bombs. The idea being that the Hun has made a sap to our trench and has mined it, and when he blows it up, he will make a big hole, a crater. It is our job to make that crater, with bombs, too hot a place for him. So we lay behind the trench at what was thought by our officer to be safe, all the night till dawn. Lay under a pollarded willow in wet grass.

A heavy mist obscured everything and dripped like rain from that confumigated willow. Most of the men had not even overcoats, none of us had waterproof sheets, and the cold damp went right through. Personally, as I am positive that Germans never explode mines at night, I went to sleep, and in that way forgot my troubles. Our trench is, of course, evacuated along that stretch, except for one lookout, who was amusingly sarcastic about his future. Coming back at dawn down the communication trench we met our General with one orderly, striding along not in the trench but up above on the flat. He is much admired by all the men, being quite fearless and cool and a hard worker.

Yesterday evening, about 6 P. M. at the prairie-dog town we saw one of our aeroplanes a long way east of us and over the German lines. They were sending shell after shell up at him. We saw one shell go very close to him, and soon the machine began to travel lower and lower while it aimed steadily for home. As it passed over the German trenches all their rifles blazed away at it, and things looked bad. But it came on very slowly and steadily, a big bi-plane. It passed through the zone of rifle fire and was safe except for a fall in landing, coming lower and lower with engine stopped, just silently gliding in, straight and true, no flurry. It passed about two or three hundred yards to our south and would have landed in our big field if we had not been there. About that time cross bullets from German lines fired at it from the sides of the apex began to fizz among us and the prairie dog dived below, but I did manage to see the machine just top a row of poplars to our southwest boundary of the field, and settle safely and quietly in a field beyond. Great sigh of relief all round. Very soon the German big guns began to search for the luckless machine, and they got the range correctly for the distance but fired too much to the north, by several hundred yards. Shell after shell they fired. Great high explosive shrapnel that burst beautifully about forty feet in the air and left a cloud of smoke. Till dark they sent these great whistling shells over us. We found afterwards that the Pilot had been shot in leg and shoulder when high up over the Germans, and that after he had pluckily made his landing they pulled the machine along and saved that too. But it was a wonderful sight and never to be forgotten.

It seems to be settled that in about a week or ten days we shall (*i. e.*, the men who have been offered commissions) be sent back to our depot and reserve squadron at the Hampton Court Barracks, there to receive some training before coming back to the front. This is not official but is probably correct.

IN BELGIUM. 16 *July* 1915.

DEAR I:

Just a few lines as I may be rushed off any minute. I got a letter from you this morning, and one from O. (from far off

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New York). Am glad you all are pleased about the commission. It seems a long way away as yet, according to this very ticklish scheme of life.

Last Wednesday night we left our billet in the village (about time too because the Huns nearly burned it up last night. They shelled it savagely, with some monstrous shells. The glare in the sky told the tale) and marched up, with that deadly pack and 150 rounds of ball. Full equipment and food too to last a while. It had poured rain in the afternoon. It was pouring when we left and it never stopped pouring till dawn. We walked about two and a half miles to the long communication trench, then followed this ghastly maze to the bitter end at the firing lines. Pitch dark, raining and blowing, clay footing slippery as ice, a narrow trench, full of holes and bumps, wading, tripping, staggering, bumping from side to side, clay besmeared, and caked from head to foot, wet through. Never was there such a nightmare. Arrived at our post just after midnight and at once as Corporal of the "listening post" I had to go out with one man to a row of willow trees, about 100 yards ahead. We had to crawl over the parapet, and through three different sets of barbed wire (ours) to a place under the willows where a sort of trench was made. This trench was by that time a fine drainage pond. The rain was pelting harder than ever. And there we stayed till 2 A. M. almost, to the first break of dawn, when I came in remembering it was over the parapet we had to return. What with wind and rain you could hear nothing definite; only the big rats that infest all the "No man's Lands" at the front. Their presence and occupation is an awful sign that we in the 20th century may be (and are) more educated and scientific, but not a whit more human or "civilised" than we were in the stone age. From 2 A. M. to 3:30 A. M. we "stood to arms," bayonets fixed. This is the usual procedure. I made some tea then and ate ravenously of bread and cheese. Sound sleep, wet and clay besmeared and be-smothered till 10 A. M. Sun was out at that time and one soon dried clothes and belongings, and no one seems to be the worse for the bad night.

Soon Mr. —— the Bombing Lieutenant came and claimed me as a bomber. He got his way, and off I had to go with him. He got me to post all the Bombers in their proper places where the magazines of bombs were. My orders coming to me, officially, as to "Grenade" Corporal of Trench No. so and so. This took me to 6 P. M. That was yesterday of course. Then I got an order to report to ——, with three Bombers, my same squad, at once. We went and found out that he was bent on a most foolhardy venture, and that was to try to capture a German alive, or wounded so as to get the Fritz to give our General information. We each took two bombs in our tunic pockets and our revolvers, and nothing else, and at 9 P. M. we popped over the parapet and started straight ahead, aiming for the river or creek which is nearer the German trench than our own, and where the Hun seems to go at night for various reasons best known to his kultured self. We were out from 9 P. M. to 1 A. M. crawling and lying still. We heard the Huns tapping stakes for wiring, heard them talking, heard a whistle blown, and were quite close to them. Close enough for this. One of their Verey lights (flare rockets) passed over us and the red hot lump that it ends up in dropped a few yards only from us. But we got no prisoners. I expect to go out again, no doubt tonight, because it seems a part of a "bomber's" duty to be a scout and a kidnapper, too. Any job that no one else wants to do is, apparently, at once given to the "bombers." We seem to be a cheerful lot, and no one seems to care, but it is hard work.

Trench life in wet weather on this low land is the slimiest life of all. Slip and slide and splash, and even up your sleeves you find it caked. How they stood it all of last winter is incredible. Those fellows must have suffered. Unthinkable misery it must have been.

IN BELGIUM. 29 *July* 1915.

DEAR I:

We are still up in front trenches holding down the firing line. My Squadron goes back to supports tonight, all excepting my Troop, which stays on here three days more, or until Sunday night, 1st August. That is unless plans change. This morning I was sent for to headquarters to be examined by the doctor, in reference to

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the commission, which appears therefore to be grinding on its appointed way safely. The days are fairly fair, but the nights are very cold, and as we turn night into day, rarely sleeping at all at night, the cold is very trying. Last night one of our reconnoitering patrols consisting of an Officer, Sergeant and Trooper, ran into a German one which saw them first, at twenty yards range, the Huns fired first killing the Sergeant and seriously wounding the Trooper. The latter was a great friend of mine, Foster, who has been my "half section" as a bomber for some time. Young Foster was shot in groin and in shin, did his best to drag away the Sergeant who was just alive, and did drag him twenty or thirty yards, until he too collapsed. The officer, a good one, emptied his automatic (10 shots) into the Huns, killing one and no doubt wounding more. They must have been hit and hurt because they squealed like swine. Help came and all were brought back. Part of our trench is less than two hundred yards from the Huns, and over this part a duel goes persistently on with grenades, day and night. They have wounded in this way two of our bombers, and we hope we have accounted for more of them. At night a great deal of rifle firing passes from both sides.

Altogether this seems to be a spiteful section of the front. Going down the long communication trench today to see the doctor we (three of us) were shelled most of the way. Just where M. was shot as we passed six or seven shells whanged to the ground, making us duck and squirm, you may be sure. I have other news also. It seems to be a fact that the reserve squadron of ours, at Hampton Court Barracks, is to go at once to the Curragh Camp, near Dublin, over in Ireland. This would mean that I would have to go there, as the headquarters of our regiment is where the reserve is.

—— has sent me a glorious hamper of good things to eat. It arrived yesterday at the front trenches. It was greatly appreciated by several of us. I am expecting our post to go at any time.

P. S. Sergeant —— has got the D. C. M. for his bombing exploit of May 25th, in which I, also, helped. Three men of the other regiment which we assisted also got D. C. Ms.

I am delighted that he got it, and the regiment is very happy.

IN BELGIUM. Sunday. 1st *August* 1915.

DEAR I:

Tonight I hope to get my first real sleep for practically a week. It gets very monotonous to have bullets whining and buzzing and cracking about, even if you feel quite safe. The mere noise after a time (a sleepless time) begins to irritate one, much as one may fight against it. Then that hopeless, sinking feeling of a mixture of wrath and the straight jacket when they begin to shell your trench. You can bear it, you have to, but you do not grin. All this after a time is a distinct strain. The "listening patrol" work out in front, too, in the dark, one man with you, among the rats and your own thoughts, with your eyes and ears agape, senses at full stretch, for over three hours at a time, is to be gone through before imagined correctly. The sentry at the parapet is bad enough. To be really on the absolute alert for hours is the pinch, and when you are "shy" many hours of sleep, have not had your boots or clothes off for nearly a week, and have scarcely even washed hands or face for the same time the plot thickens. Your food too, you must cook yourself. Wood is a treat to find. Everyone after it, and many a man risks a bullet to find it, or get it if he sees it. For water you almost always have to go a long way, you usually risk a squealing bullet, or sometimes a blasting "maniac" of a shell, and the physical energy needed to carry the stuff is no playful joke. Then you eat at any irregular hour, scrappy meals on bits of paper or wood or cardboard, anything but your own greasy unwashed plate. This is not a complaint. I am trying to give you some idea of the life and I am not in the least bit exaggerating, I am underestimating. Add the dirt, the clay, the small usual fly in myriads, and the loathely egg-laying blue-bottle in swarms, and the little friendly confidential beasties that lurk in your dugout, and you may gather about 60% of the true facts. The other 40% you must learn only if you spend a week at the game. I say nothing of hot sun, rain, cold or dust, all the things which go to make up bad weather.

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In Belgium. Sunday. 8th *August* 1915.

Dear I:

Back again to the front trenches, with all its disgusting excitements and disgusting monotony, and disgusting discomfort. Rainy weather. Grey as a badger. The sky full of grey wool, reeking damp. I am in charge of the Squadron bombers under ——. This bit of front is quiet; apart from snipers and enfilading long shots and occasional bursts of shrapnel, nothing seems to happen. Two of our men, in "reserves" of —— Squadron, got under some shrapnel yesterday evening, and were peppered severely. The regiment marched up to the trenches in broad daylight, because —— wanted to review the regiment we were relieving before dark. Result, certain exposure to the enemy observation balloons to be paid for some day. It is a month today since my commission was offered to me, and I really believe this will be my last time in the trenches as a non-commissioned officer. We think that the whole Brigade will be taken out to get our horses back again and that we were being held back until all trench work was done. Our Commissions are in the Colonel's hands we believe. If this is true, I am glad, because I rather hated to leave when the men were still in the trenches. This may be moonshine, of course.

A fine parcel came from you today. Just when and where it was needed. Am quite busy so will cut short.

In Belgium. 9 *August* 1915.

Dear M:

This is from the front, and firing line, and I am writing in a loathesome dungeon of a "dugout" made of sandbags filled with clay. The bags are old and rotten, and have come away, leaving the walls a sort of vile crumbling material that falls in showers on you, and your stuff, all the time. Needless to say the roof is so low that you cannot sit upright. I am sheltering from a fine rain, that incessantly falls on this wretched country. Day in, day out, not omitting the nights, it rains this fine rain. Splashes of sunlight occasionally, and occasionally also splashes of heavy rain. We are very near to a real fighting centre, just to the southward. On July 30th, we distinctly and plainly heard all the appalling fight which took place when the Huns used "flame projectors" on us for the first time. The following dawn Bedlam broke loose again up there, when the trenches were re-taken by us. This morning, at peep of dawn, or 2 : 30 A. M. the same terrific booming of big guns suddenly started, preceded by a perfect frog-chorus of rifle popping, up in the same direction, north of us. I wish you could only hear it once. It is overwhelming when you merge sound into thought and imagination. You want to be there and yet you are very glad you are not. You are overawed completely. Human thunder and lightning is the best description. You hear the crash and roll, and you see the flashes on the horizon of the great bursting shells, and you can feel for the poor chaps who are under it all, both sides, you feel for both. The matter is too big to feel small things. As the uproar goes on, the news of orders evidently reach great big gun batteries farther off, and one by one, nearer to us, the big guns, howitzers, begin to talk. In this fight, great guns immediately behind our front joined in, sending their shells for miles. Afar off continues the regular booming roll and near by the roar and crash combines. The air is full of great whirring noises, high, high up, as the big howitzer shells tear their way through. They come so fast that you cannot distinguish the beginning or the end of any one shell flight. Coveys and flights of them like gigantic birds, with great beating wings, whirr their way at a fabulous pace to join in the pandemonium in the distance. Like the stone in the pool the ripples travel far and our immediate front becomes agitated. Maxims rap-rap nervously and little bursts of rifle fire spring up all about. Flare lights flare forth all about, and big rockets swoop gracefully across "No man's Land." Bullets skim the parapet with an angry buzz, like irritated wasps, other bullets hit the sandbags with a terrific smack, louder than the original report at the rifle mouth. Still others whine high up, the whine altering in tone according to the height up, and the distance the thing has come, finally grading up to a bullet that makes a noise exactly like the mosquito who has quite gorged himself on you, and flies away distinctly pink in colour. You have all these sounds going on all at once. Exciting, there is nothing

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so exciting or which makes you feel so small.

I am now called upon to catch the post —ahead of time of course.

IN BELGIUM. 12 *August* 1915.

(Wasps are the bane of my life.)

DEAR I:

Yesterday evening, being very fine, clear, and still, both our and the Hun aeroplanes were out in force. Two Hun planes appeared. One was driven home at once by one of our batteries. The thing just fled back. The other broke through and began to look at us. It dropped a smoke signal almost over us, as we lay in the trench and passed on. Two of our machines went in pursuit, and they disappeared going north, but we saw white smoke from the Hun, and heard their maxim guns going "rap-rap" high up in the air. Later we heard that the Hun had been brought down. These Hun machines lead a hunted life, fly very high, and look as if they are scared and worried.

IN BELGIUM. 30 *August* 1915.

DEAR I:

I seem to be in the same position as you. Expecting to see you at any time, makes writing appear almost unnecessary. No news about the commission. Days pass and weeks pass and no word comes. It is certainly most trying and unsettling, but can be endured like a good many other things out here, which are not done for the extreme pleasure they give. We are still in our same camp of huts and leading a very safe existence. On the 25th last, we, as a Brigade, were paraded before the Grand Llama of Tibet of Ours. He arrived with his Staff, to thank us for not having done those things which we ought not to have done, and so on. He was very complimentary to our Brigade General, and gave us more praise than we were really entitled to. He, also, said that, as to our horses, he sympathized strongly (being cavalry himself) and promised us to the effect that when the time came for him to need cavalry again he would personally remember and see that we were equipped with that all needful part of a Trooper's equipment—a horse. So we cheered him and he went away leaving with me an impression of a man in whom I could trust, and follow, and obey to the limit. A simple and a fine character, with just enough of dash of Irish to add the sparkle and effect. In other words—he went just a little to my head. I heard him say to one of his own Staff "indeed they are a very fine body of men. Are the commanding Officers any good?" But the answer also, was pitched so low that I doubt if even he himself heard it. Every two or three days we go on some trench fatigue, somewhere near the front lines. The last one was up on quite a famous Hill near a very famous Wood, and one could trace the "front" by the flare lights for a long, long way on either side. To our South, about a mile away, a great fire was raging, looking more as if fire was over-running dry and standing grain. It is strange but, to me, the sound of the normal and regular rifle fire at night is the sound of water in the shape of waves lapping and splashing against the piles of a wharf in deep water. This effect comes to me if the firing is not too close. It comes in waves and not regularly. Occasionally one of our big batteries blazed into life and sent great whirring shells rushing into space over us into a town infested by Huns opposite to us. Then you saw the sudden flashes over there, and later comes the sound. Some poor devil, in trouble, mental or physical or mortal. We start these "fatigues" at 6:30 P. M. walk three or four or five miles, work till about 1:30 A. M. and walk back by about 3:30 A. M. Coming back from the last one our Squadron evidently tried to take a short cut home. Short cuts in the dark are usually failures. At any rate the Squadron found itself climbing through four wire fences, two posts and rails, and gate, and it was most amusing on the whole. It takes time for a Squadron of men to climb through a barbed wire fence, I can assure you, and after the second or third it became a huge joke.

Post man is waiting for this letter and I can go on no more.

IN BELGIUM. 13 *September* 1915.

DEAR I:

I have just read your letter. Somehow I feel very angry that you should be under those devilish Zeppelins. To be even disturbed by them. It is all a part towards a better and complete reckoning with the

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Huns some day, and I hope it will be in the Hun country. I know that you are not in the least afraid of them, and the feeling uppermost in me is a silent rage, and an anxiety to get even. It was an historic sight you saw, though, and I envy you that. Maybe I shall see it when I come back, and we shall sally out together from your "wee hoosie" and see the great beasts of the air at their proud work.

This morning about 7:30 A. M. I saw a sight myself. I saw a German aeroplane brought down by one of our beauties. The fight took place straight over our heads. Imagine a gem of a morning, cool and quiet, not a cloud in the sky, and the sunshine shimmering everywhere through a light mist. Overhead all clear and no mist. Suddenly two Huns in the air, and at once two machines appear going like the wind, and we realize that a chase is going on. As they circle and whirl the sun strikes their metallic parts, and they flash and shine like two flying fish which have just slipped up from the sea into sunshine. We could see the round bulls eyes which mark our machines and we could see that our machine had maneuvered into the best place, up above the Hun, and when straight above us we could hear the machine gun speak from our machine, faint innocent little far away pops, and of a sudden the beautiful racing Hun machine fell straight down a long way, and then recovered; it slanted to the ground in the opposite direction to the German lines, and in a moment it had disappeared low down. Then we heard a burst of rifle fire, from one of our many camps around, in the direction it had gone, and then soon far away cheering, which came to us from Camp to Camp. Our machine which dropped the Hun was soon joined by another of ours, which came in racing out of space higher up in the blue. They circled each other twice, and probably communicated with each other, and then our machine which did the killing quietly speeded up straight for the German front, to its daily duty and was soon under fire there. As it passed over us we cheered it and the raucous shrill, between-the-teeth whistle of the Maple Leaf men predominated. I hope that pilot heard it. Later we heard that the machine was captured about three miles back of us. Both the Hun pilot and observer were killed by the rifle fire at about four hundred yards. They were slanting down, doomed, when they suddenly picked up and were just about to rise. Then the rifles brought them down. And the machine is of the latest and not much hurt. A very satisfactory morning's work. Two other Hun machines came over later to try and find the lost one. One of them our batteries made turn tail and fly for home, and the other flew very very high in a wide insweep of a circle round and behind where the tragedy occurred. These might have been live, swift-flying birds seeking a lost mate. It is very hard to realize that there are men in these machines. The bird idea is perfect in these racing machines, absolutely perfectly handled. They look as sure of themselves as any bird could, and as to their falling to earth —not a particle of fear.

— Gayfere Street, Westminster, S. W.
28 *September* 1915.

Dear M:

Just a line to say I got here night before last, after a journey of eleven days from the front in Belgium. Spent most of yesterday at the War Office and my papers have gone the round to the last inch, and have been accepted to the last inch, and at any moment the *Gazette* will gazette me.

To rise from the ranks takes some doing, not only at the front but more so at home.

I expect ten days to two weeks leave, and then shall have to go to the Curragh near Dublin. This is a big cavalry camp where our home headquarters and reserve squadrons are.

How long I stay there I cannot say, but, as I am booked for Bombing Officer in our regiment, I do not think they will give me the usual cavalry training, and I shall get back to the front in a hurry.

Things are getting lively, but they will get still livelier, and I do not want to miss the best of it. All the same I am not worried for I feel sure that there will be plenty left for next spring and summer.

Beresford Barracks,
The Curragh, Ireland
27 *October* 1915.

Dear M:

Leading this peaceful existence is inclined to make one presuppose that it is of no interest to another, and this is my apology for not writing. All the same my

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Colonel at the front has already sent for me, and just as soon as I am passed out in drill and manual and musketry and riding school, etc. etc. I shall get ten days leave, and then "Vorwarts," for the soggy winter trenches to my beloved bombers. I hope to go to some bombing school at Hythe for a few days to pick up any new bombing schemes to blot out Huns, but that is yet uncertain. The bombers are the pick of the regiment and it is something to be proud of to get the chance to show the way to those fellows. A bomber is called on to do a lot of work not bombing, such as crawling about at night sniffing trouble, and likely points where Huns may be blown sky high, and if I have luck I ought to get quick promotion. I must say I would like to wind up as a Captain, at least. At any rate, I can truthfully say that I have already blotted out enough Huns to pay for my scalp, if that business deal comes to the point of record. And it is a most cheerful and fortifying sensation. I would like my epitaph to read "He paid his way in Huns."

The riding school is a rough game, where a man soon learns or is covered with bruises and tan bark. We are in the school of the 8th Hussars, regulars, and doughty men. The riding-master and several sergeant-majors stand or ride in the centre with long pop whips, and the various orders are performed with celerity or the whips get to work. I am doing very finely. Yes. Indeed. I now go careering over jumps with drawn sword, and it is a regulation, sharp affair warranted to stick a baby hippo. Outside the school are all sorts of jumps of every sort. One favourite affair of the chesty individuals is a three jump thing over solid poles, young trees, so that when you have jumped the first one you are in a small fenced enclosure and must jump out. After No. 2 jump it is the same. The jumps are not high, but very solid. So far I have had only one fall. One of those life and death struggles to get into the saddle lasting a long time (seemed like a life time) while you hang with everything except your teeth before you slide sadly to the grinning ground. This was on a very bad rearing horse, which was ordered not to be brought back to the school. There are a lot of us being trained here, and we sit down over thirty to mess. Men of all ages and civil occupations, but none of them, except our lot, have been to the front. I see nothing stupendously difficult in the training of a British Officer, and feel reasonably sure of passing my tests with a modicum of honour. But when a big war is going on and One is in it, the only place to be is where the noise is, and as near as possible to the noise. So I am beginning to be "fed up" with this easy going life and shall welcome orders to move me across the water. I saw Mrs. —— in London, with I., and I gave her my war-diary from which she will gather local colour and anecdotes for her recruiting campaign. She was as wonderful as ever and seemed very pleased with the diary. I. is with her now in South Wales, busily engaged in recruiting miners. The war prospects are very good for us, on the whole, and, by spring, there will be big changes. The Huns are playing out in Hun power and that is the only way to end this war.

Beresford Barracks,
Curragh Camp, Ireland.
Nov. 19th, 1915.

Dear R:

Personally I am as well as ever. The only memento in that time, which I gathered at the front, is in the shape of a damaged left elbow and a sore left rib which came to me by a fall one pitch dark and wet night in a communication trench. Place very uneven, with loose boards, and fairly greasy with clay. "Rearguard not in touch" the cry, and everyone in a desperate hurry to catch up. Full pack and extra ammunition (250 rounds) and I came a hopeless purler. Kept it quiet because if I had shown it to a doctor I would probably have been sent to some base hospital and been forgotten for weeks. Might have missed my commission. That was nearly three months ago, and both places are very sore yet. But I don't need my left side to throw bombs and the Lord has spared my right side for a special purpose. I have got more than my share of Huns as it is and I firmly intend to get some more. Three of us, with sufficient bombs, accounted for 46 dead Huns, 26 wounded and 22 prisoners in one single afternoon. This was a redoubt which they surrendered, after they had had enough. About forty more of them bolted the trench earlier in the

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game and took to the open, but our shrapnel picked *them up*. It just plastered them, on a side slope of a hill, and only a handful got away. I can see nothing but red when I think of them. If you had lived in Belgium you would understand. It is quite impossible to exaggerate on that subject. There have been hundreds and hundreds of Belgian and French and Polish Edith Cavells.

As soon as I pass a few more tests I hope to get some leave. Two days ago I wound up my "musketry" at the ranges as a "First class shot" not as "Marksman" which is better yet. But I take small interest in rifles. Bombers now only carry revolvers and bombs.

My Colonel, at the front, has already sent for me and I am booked for second in command of the regimental bombers. About a month I think will see me back there.

The training I am getting here is most of it quite useless for trench warfare, and, in the dear old British way, they do not seem to realize it. They worry along training men exactly as if it was a Boer War instead of for trench warfare at 300 yds. range and frontal attacks through a maze of pits and craters and shell holes and barbed wire.

Things may look bad for us on paper, in the papers, but they are not really, just the opposite. This nation has only just begun to growl. It is not really angry yet. The time will come when it will be mad with rage, that is when we enter Germany and then I shall be sorry for the decent Germans. This country gets solidly stronger every day, and more determined. The Huns will find a shortage of men before long. Their long fronts must retire to shorter fronts and then Hell will break loose on them. The Allies will exact full reparation.

Goodbye.

IN BELGIUM. Wed. *Jan.* 5/16.

DEAR I:

I am too occupied to do much writing, being busy at the Brigade Machine Gun School. Here I have been for five days and very much kept at work. There is a lot to learn, and none too much time for the course.

I fear I am out of my bombing for the time being. You see new rules only allow for one officer per regiment for bombers and there was one, of course, when I arrived. He is a newish man and has never been in a front trench but as long as he attends to his work that makes no difference. He is a very good chap too.

So I applied for the Machine Gun School and here I am. Since coming here the regiment has all changed. We are leaving our old Brigade and are to be Divisional Cavalry, mounted. This only means 2 Squadrons and 10 officers. The rest will return to the Curragh I suppose. If they will leave me alone until I finish this course (it lasts a month) I shall try to transfer to some infantry regiment, perhaps Canadian, as I do not fancy footing about doing police work anywhere from 10 to 20 miles behind the front lines. Waiting for the big break-through which may never come.

IN BELGIUM. Friday, *Jan.* 7/16

DEAR I:

The news is all confirmed and official about our regiment becoming Divisional Cavalry in a few days and I am completely disgusted. If I am allowed to finish my machine gun course I see a chance to leave the cavalry and see something of the real war with the help of the Maxims or Colts, and I expect to be allowed to finish. This course will keep me 3 weeks longer. 9 A. M. to 5 P. M. every day, Sundays included. I may call upon H. J. to help me to find another regiment where I can be a machine gunner instead of a cavalry policeman posing as a trench warrior. The real fact being that the cavalry police never go near enough to hear the sound of a gun in a trench. You might send me, please, each week a tin of oat cake biscuit and a good cheese. This will help any Mess I may be with. Do not send any cigarettes for I can get them much cheaper here and the same ones exactly. No time to continue!

IN BELGIUM. *Jan.* 11, 1916.

DEAR I:

I have been called back from my Machine Gun training to the regiment as we expect to move back at any moment to some point nearer the coast, where we shall reform and re-train as cavalry.

The Colonel has told me he will see that

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I finish my course in machine guns there, so I feel more or less contented.

As soon as I am passed as a machine gunner I will be able to transfer if it looks as if this regiment is doomed to police work. With the help of ——, whom I heard from yesterday, it should be quite easy. In the mean time one does not do much of anything except plough about in the mud in long walks to points of interest on the front. Our guns are very busy these days, night and day their boom is heard from somewhere near by, and last Monday at dawn, for an hour, the Hun got a regular "strafing." The Munition question seems to be much easier for our gunners. All this must mean continuous casualties for the Hun, and seems to be our winter programme. Ours, too, are quite heavy, of course, but that is only to be expected. The weather is normally vile. Windy, east and northeast blows, rain off and on every day, cold and raw and cloudy. One lives in an atmosphere of mud. The coal supply is very inadequate and the huts we live in are rarely warm. The only way to warm up is to walk in the mud, which soon does the trick. By the time I am fit for machine gun work I hope the weather will be vastly better.

In France. *Jan.* 16, 1916.

Dear I:

Yesterday we moved back from the front and we are now close to Headquarters, billeted in a village.

Our job is to be cavalry. To act as Bodyguard to the Headquarters' Staff, I believe. Highly honorary but a futile profession. Any day now, though, I go to a course of Maxim gun instruction and I propose to follow my nose when I am qualified.

At present I am O. C. Gun Section, and brought the Gun Section (Machine Gun) yesterday to this place. We entrained with the rest of the regiment, after a march of a few miles, at 11 A. M. All of us travelled in horse trucks, officers and all.

About 2 P. M. we de-trained and marched 5 miles to this village. With my usual luck I struck a grand billet. Two of us are together, —— and I. He is the real O. C. Gun Section, I being only his understudy. As he is on leave I looked out for him. We have a big sitting room, intensely French, with mural oil paintings, stuffed birds, and distorted plaster frescoes dotted about, and tiled floor. A bed room each, quite void of any hint of washing, full of mirrors. Funny old farm people, very polite and hospitable. They have three sons serving, one being a prisoner in Germany. The old lady says "He is hungry; ah yes, I know."

It would do England some good to have the same conditions for a while and as for Ireland——

In France. *Jan.* 20, 1916.

Dear I:

There is not much to write about or I would write more. This is peculiarly peaceful as an atmosphere.

Luckily there is a big flying camp near by, and one can spend very engrossing hours watching them start and return. In the evenings they come in one after another, fast, on each other's very heels, just before dark. With a terrible roar and vibration they tear by and lightly alight—just like big birds. And these machines are not playing at flying. They have been out on business and have been well peppered at, at any rate, for this is a camp for "long reconnaissance." These machines in five hours go and return from the very centre of Belgium, far inside the Hun lines. All the men in charge are old hands and they alight with certainty just where they want to and then "taxi" the machine along the ground to the very door of their hangar. I have designs on going for a trip with one of them when I get a bit better known to them, unless it is against all their rules.

On Sunday next I begin my course of the Vickers Maxim Gun, the very finest gun in existence. The best school at the front is only 2 miles away and I shall ride over every morning from my present billet. The Colonel, today, told the Gun Section, *i. e.* "us" that, when we get into prime practise again, we may expect to be detailed to be attached to some regiment and see fighting; so the Gun Section is quite happy.

The great thing for me is to get thoroughly qualified, for there is good use, somewhere, for every machine gunner. It is a wonderful toy to juggle with, a wonderful piece of mechanism and a great stimulant to imagination. To look at one of them quickens your pulse!

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THE DISCOVERY OF POUCE-LONG

By Mary Raymond Shipman Andrews

ILLUSTRATIONS BY A. B. FROST

I AM Bob. The description isn't enough for a passport, but it's enough for this tale I'm going to expound, considering that I'm just a clothes-hanger, to spread out the tale on, in any case. Last summer my older brother, Walter, who's a sort of lawyer effect winters, and for two months in summer a mighty satisfactory small boy, came up with me to our club in Canada. On a day in August we 'lighted off the one-horse train at our club station, marooned in the wilderness, into the arms of four half-breed guides. We then promptly began enjoying ourselves. Which we did at accelerating speed every minute till we got to our own log camp, Château-Rien, as we call it, next day. And thereafter more and more. We built an extra cabin for transients, and that was going up, and I don't know any sound more cheerful than hammering and sawing on a thing that's going to be your own. So the first two weeks we were busy watching a bunch of guides do architect and carpenter and build a guest-house, absolutely from the forest. They're pretty skilful at it, and their names were enough to make it picturesque: Delphise Gros-Louis and Beauramé Moison and René Sioui—pronounced See-wee—a true Huron name. Delphise was a languid, long, good-looking youngster, with an air as if he had spent most of his days winning tennis tournaments. Poor lad, chopping wood and paddling canoes for other people's fishing was more his speed; I'd bet something he'd never even seen a tennis-court in his career.

Well, one sunshiny afternoon when the camp was nearly done, and when Walter and I were loafing about bossing the job, this tall, millionairish Delphise Gros-Louis lifted his bored black eyes from the tree he was planing for the roof and gazed down the lake. With that the sad black eyes turned to me, and Delphise remarked, in a slow undertone as if it was really almost too exhausting to speak at all:

"*Un canot*, M'sieur Bob."

I wasn't born tired, so I whirled fairly swiftly and stared down the two miles of jig-dancing water. Sure enough, there was a black spot with a flash to it; the flash was the paddle. Two flashes—two men paddling. At once slithers of excitement seized the camp, for we hadn't seen a soul but our own party, and the canoe must be coming to us because there was nowhere else to go. Walter got out his glass and search-lighted them, and reported:

"André and another man; a guide, I think."

André is the guardian of the club, and it's his job to go through the five hundred square miles of it once in so often, cutting portages and keeping club-camps in order. Up to the *quai* the canoe flashed pretty promptly and André stepped out as a man might step out of his shoe; it was about as natural to him. He's a little bird, not over five feet, and as chunky as a pony and quick as a wildcat. He has china-blue eyes and a face like a winter apple, round and rosy, and a voice and manner of a giant. He lays down the law and states unmitigated facts. Mostly they're wrong, but he's so positive that he fools you about every time. Also he loves to talk English, and I certainly love to hear him, for it's just as positive as his statements, and even more bias. He wore a pinkish flannel shirt and pronounced suspenders, and trousers that had seen better days were tied up in four points, two of them anchored by safety-pins to the suspenders high under his arms. Husky blue wool socks climbed outside the trouser legs and shoe-packs ended him. Everything was about the same tone of dull color. He wiped his

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hand off on his very dirty clothes with care, and shook hands with us.

"No, not mail," he stated in a big, strong voice. "I am goin' on de woods troo my trip-le to cut portage. I come off Lac aux Écorces thees mornin'. Weendy to-day, eh? Artoor—" With that I noticed Arthur—pronounced always Ar-toor. Arthur looks like a Spanish nobleman gone wrong; he's tall and slim and has unduly large bronze eyes and a haughty mustache. He doesn't make good, however, for he's shy and stammers, and if you speak to him suddenly he throws a fit. There was quite a crisis when Walter and I became suddenly aware of him in the bushes back of André. He choked and swallowed and gurgled. André watched cheerfully while we shoved him back on the rails with a few kind words, and then proceeded to take the lead again. He jerked his elbow at the cabin.

"I hear you got some new camp, so I comin' see dat."

And he laughed merrily as if at a first-class joke. We held up the cabin for him to admire, and he was kind but firm about it, so that we felt that, while we were allowed to keep it, it was no great shakes. André proceeded to more important topics.

"Me, I travel to-day off Lac aux Écorces," he mentioned again.

Walter separated his mouth from his pipe. "Any fishing up that way?" he inquired.

"Aw—yess," said André scornfully. "Feeshin'? You lak for catch beeg feesh?"

"Rather," Walter allowed, which was restraint, seeing that he'd sell his soul for its weight in trout.

"Ho!" André threw at us in a manner of superiority. "Me and Artoor"—and Artoor hiccoughed suddenly at the mention of his name—"me and Artoor took feesh. Just we t'ought we have feesh for dinner. We not go feesh mush, we go out yesterday on bright sunshining and take feesh. How beeg she, Artoor, eh! *Quel grandeur ce poisson-là?!*"

Artoor turned scarlet and went through soundless agonies trying to produce a word. André turned from him in friendly contempt—a man who couldn't talk!

"Oh, she maybe four pound—we got her joost for have our dinner. We didn't try on feesh'n'. Lots more biggair feesh on dat hole. We not been feesh'n'. Dose beeg feesh came runnin' oop by side lak salmons. School on salmons."

Walter's pipe was out of a job; he was drinking in André's words. "Is, that, so?" asked Walter in his most judicial tone. "Where was that, André?"

André made a gesture of disdain as if he had numbers of lakes up his sleeve all filled with four-pound trout. "Dat lak there? Wot lak she war, Artoor?" And Artoor worked his jaw and gurgled. André appeared to gather information from this. "Yess. Das so," he announced firmly. "Dat lake she war Lac Pouce-Long; she by dat side—" he jerked his elbow to the south. "Over more far by Lac aux Écorces."

"Pouce-Long," considered Walter. "I don't know it. Is it lately discovered?" For our club is so big that it's far from all mapped yet, and every little while somebody finds a new lake which only Indians have seen before. I found two myself, but "that's another story."

"Yess-sir," stated André. "Me, I discover her dat lac las' winter on a snowshoe. I war go trap on Lac aux Écorces, and I travel on dat way—" André stopped and picked up a stick and began to draw on the gallery floor. We couldn't see what he drew, but that didn't discourage him. "Lak dat side," he explained, and drew rapidly forms of mountains and lakes and lines of portages connecting them. And Walter and I leaned over and watched the stick wiggle over the logs with tops smoothed off, which were the floor of the gallery, and André chattered in his strident, big voice, and somehow he got us seeing a chain of new lakes, and bays and islands in them, and mountains you wound around, and deep valleys with streams through that you followed up, and the beaver in some of the lakes, and great beaver dams across the outlet; all that and a heap more that little apple-faced Frenchman made a picture of in his queer smashed English, and got us, with his enthusiasm and his beautiful gift of lying, worked up to the jumping-point. So that we felt when he was through that we had to go and see it all

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for ourselves. And Pouce-Long, undiscovered, five-mile Pouce-Long! Pouce-Long, where the four-pound trout, like salmon, came rushing up in schools to the fly! There was no portage, André explained, but, with the stick on the gallery floor, he showed us where the inlet came into another little lake this side, up the valley of which inlet we must follow to Pouce-Long. It seemed that he had fallen first on a bay of the big lake, behind an island, and he thought that was all there was of it.

"*Mais, ce n'est qu'un pouce-long*," André had said regarding that bit of snowfield. And the name was given. "But that new lake is about good three miles long and good wide and nice little island at the middle," said André. Yet an inch long he had called it and Lake-Inch-Long it was forever.

Then André, having explained what was fitting, asked if there was mail to send out, nodded at us, sprang down the little hill to the *quai*, and slid into the canoe as the canoe slid from shore, with as little fuss as a fish turns in water.

Next day Walter and I picked up four guides and some stuff and started for Lake Pouce-Long. Walter had a toothache, but I reasoned that exercise was splendid for the teeth, so with low grumblings he came along, accompanied by a rubber hot-water bag which his faithful spouse had stuck into his kit. Never before did I see my brother associate with a hot-water bag, and since that trip I conclude never again. Now Pouce-Long is no summer morning's jaunt. It was weary lakes and mountains away, and if we got there at the end of a second day's tight going we were lucky. Also it was hunting-season, and though Walter had killed a big caribou on the first of September, yet meat was getting low in the larder and I was to go ahead in my canoe with Josef and hunt on the way. Which delays.

It was the best sort of weather that early September manufactures, and September is good at weather, when, with two lakes already behind us, we tackled the first real portage, the steep, long climb to Lac Madame. There is no relenting in that portage; it keeps you at one merciless footlift after another, and when you look up to see the top, behold a precipice. But yet in the nature of things you do get there, and there Walter and I stopped for a minute and set down our guns and panted.

"Gosh!" was my comment, and then I said: "How's toofie?"

But Walter was morose. "I'm sweatin', Bobby. I'm sweatin'!" was all he condescended to answer.

And with that we saw Josef climbing silently below us, the canoe on his head, and the effect of him like a strange and giant insect, writhing upward. We shouldered arms again, and on we went, in level country now, till the trail dipped through marsh to Madame, and Josef slipped my canoe into water and we pushed out quietly ahead to see what wild beasts Madame might have. Nothing. We wound on through another bad portage to Lac Trèfle—Clover Lake—and across that *en canot*, and then a portage and then Lac Squawmish; and a portage and Lac Orage; and a portage and Lac Couchée de Soleil; and there we lunched. At five, after still other portages and lakes, we reached Lac aux Écorces and made camp a little way down its outlet, so the noise of our camp would not disturb the game. Days are short in September, and at seven-thirty that night we had dined—or had supper—and were thinking with eagerness of bed. No one who has not tramped and waded in hunting-boots all day long can know the luxury of getting out of hunting-boots. First, like the fed, warmed animals that we were, we sat by the camp-fire after supper and smoked our pipes and blinked in a pleasant, bestial torpor. Walter blew out at intervals in recriminations against the Lac Madame portage.

"That was an awful hill, Bobby. My back nearly broke carrying the rifle. Bobby, I'm glad we have to go down that hill and not up it going home. Bobby, that hill was very dangerous to my health. My heart was pretty well exhausted when—" and then a huge "Ah!" of comfort, and an affectionate patting of himself to exhibit how comfy he was.

Now, Walter loves to listen to himself complaining, but he's strong as an ox and I was not bothered about his back or

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his heart, yet I did have a horrid vision of a tooth putting the screws on him at Lac aux Écorces, unfrequented of dentists. So as soon as I could interrupt I remarked: "We'll trot you harder than that to-morrow. But if I were you I'd stick the little hot-water bag in my downy to-night and keep cosey and not give toofie a chance."

We did that. I went over to the guide's camp, where the firelight flickered through the trees, and got a kettle, and hung it on a crotched stick over the fire, and boiled water. Then we filled that deceitful little red rubber bag tight up—afterward the wise told us it was too tight up—and we tucked it deep into the blankets in Walter's bed. Walter brought out another large "Ah!" of comfort, and grinned as he thought of the joy that was to be his, for the night was chilly. We sat down again by the fire and put on birch logs, and filled our pipes by the light of the bark on them, which flared up crackling. We smoked there contentedly perhaps half an hour yet, saying little, thinking largely about how pleasant it would be to get off the boots, but, inside that restricted intellectual limit, perfectly happy. Then I looked at my watch, and behold it was eight-thirty. Now, I had planned to get up at four and go moose-hunting; I thought it about time for Bobby to go to bed. I made some such statement, and with that Walter rolled upward and dived into the tent. I heard the familiar long "Ah!" of rapture and gathered that the hot-water bag was getting in its perfect work, and then came a sound of woe indescribable, and out from the tent exploded a large "Hell!"

I stood transfixed—my mind wasn't active, and it appeared to strike work just there.

"Hell! Curses!" came from the tent, and a manner of wail.

I leaped inside. "What's the matter, Walter?" And I knew.

He was bending over the balsam bed, his only refuge from a day of hard work; his hand was deep in the nest of red blankets prepared so carefully, and his face was lifted to me as I shot through the curtains with the most broken-hearted look I ever saw on a gent's visage.

"It leaks," he stated. "It leaks."

There wasn't any laughing then, though we both knew there would be later. It was pure tragedy for a few minutes. We tore that cosey bed to pieces; we built up a huge fire and we stood by it and waved blanket after blanket—there were four thicknesses—in front of the flames while we ourselves scorched gladly as we saw the steam rising from the woolly stuff. The hot-water bag was little, but oh, my! It had worked both ways with fiendish thoroughness and everything was wet all through. We might have called the guides, but the poor brutes had been carrying canoes and packs all day and we hadn't the heart. So there we stood and waved lengths of scarlet blanket and gray blanket till it got funny and we laughed. We laughed till we almost dropped the things in the fire. It took a good while to dry them, and it was all of the perfectly devilish hour of ten o'clock before we got to bed.

I fell away to sleep instantly, and I gather from further developments that brother did the same. The fire must have died down rapidly; I heard a log roll off with the outside fringe of my consciousness, but I was too far gone to realize whether it was a log or distant thunder. It was all one to me. My next mental registration was deep disgust at Walter. He was calling me, calling insistently.

"Get up, get up, Bob! It's daylight. Get up!" he hammered at my reluctant consciousness.

I groaned. "Josef hasn't whistled," I argued.

"He must. You didn't hear him," Walter kept at me. "If you want to be on that marsh by daylight you've got to be quick. It's light now. Get up, Bob!" A boot came my way.

I dragged protesting muscles out of the perfect satisfaction of the bed, and proceeded with eyes nearly shut to get into articles of clothing, clammy hunting-boots being the climax. It did seem as if I had taken off those abominable boots only sixty minutes before. But I laced them painfully by the sense of touch solely, for it was far from bright, even if it was, as Walter stated, daylight. Somehow I got dressed. I threw water over my face, not so much for cleanliness as to get awake. It seemed as if sleep held every inch of me with chains. The water

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helped a little. I crammed on a hat and picked up my rifle. At that second "I wonder what time it really is," I reflected, and I put down the rifle and took out my watch.

I stared. Then I rubbed my eyes. I stared again. Then I held the watch to my ear. It was going. With that I looked up through the trees at the pale light that was filtering. Over the lake a round of silver hung in a cloudless sky; down the river rippled a path of glorious moonlight. Moonlight! The watch said eleven-thirty! With a howl of rage I leaped into the tent and attacked that guardian angel my brother, already sleeping again like a baby. It is needless to tell what I did and said, but as far as heaven gave me strength I got even. Walter was surprised at first and then he seemed to consider it funny. After which he pleaded:

"Don't! Don't, Bob! You hurt me, Bob," he pleaded. And also: "Be careful. If you make such a noise you'll scare all the game."

I undressed, gnashing my teeth, and got into the blankets for what was left of the night. Josef had Walter's alarm-watch, so he was due to wake me. And pretty soon, as it seemed, I heard a whistle. Quite a special whistle guides have: it appears to cut through the stillness without tearing it; something like Saladin's scimitar which whipped across the gauze veil and left it in two parts yet undisturbed.

There was a gray line where the tent-flap was open, and I recognized it for September 7th's first stagger at daylight. I went through the irksome motions of dressing once more, and crammed extra cartridges in my pockets, carefully subduing them in handkerchiefs and such so they wouldn't rattle, and then I stole across to the guides' camp. Josef and I partook of uninteresting chocolate out of a thermos bottle, and swung off stealthily up the portage. There was a manner of grayness sifting about us, and the portage was a vague line of humps, where it was forbidden to stumble one least stumble or crack one twig. We got through intact and slid the canoe in with infinitely slow pains, as quietly as the job may be done, and then we were off. Josef plied a crafty paddle in the stern and I took a full minute to throw forward the lever of my 38–55 Winchester and slip a cartridge into the barrel and move the lever slowly, slowly, to its place again, and half-cock.

We floated around the point like a dead stick on a tide, and I couldn't hear or feel Josef take a stroke—yet we floated. The Adirondack guides are sharks at paddling and easy winners over French-Canadian *habitants*, but Josef is half Huron, and when it comes to hunting on land or water he has an extra sense five thousand years old which the likes of us can't see into. Pretty soon, in a guttural low whisper of his which is distinct to understand and yet blends in a remarkable way into forest sounds, so that it might be the rustling of grasses or lapping of water or wind in the branches, pretty soon Josef made a suggestion. He suggested that we should land in a marsh across the lake and watch there. To the even ripple of water from the paddle-blade—for we were *au large* now, and might go faster—we beat it over the pond, till suddenly, half-way, the paddle missed a stroke, hung on the wing. With that we began to go forward in large jumps but without a sound, and I proceeded to stare with all my eyes at that quiet stretch of marsh spread before us a quarter of a mile away. Not a sound or a movement to my ears and eyes. Yet I knew for certain that Josef's change of paddling meant something, so I stared some more. All the time we were running up and up, through the gray morning, over the misty lake to the marsh. And then came Josef's penetrating whisper, only just louder than a breath.

"*Un cerf*, m'sieur—a red deer."

With that I saw something move, back among the tall marsh-grasses and Indian tea-bushes, something brownish, tannish, grayish, longish—shading into the ochres of the marsh. Only the movement betrayed it; one thinks constantly in the woods of Darwin and his theory of mimicry and protection of coloring. We slid up and up, and the little animal's back showed plainly now, about six inches of it above the tea-bushes, and the long neck and slim head rose at the end. I have killed oodles of deer in the Adirondacks; I was out for bull moose; also there was

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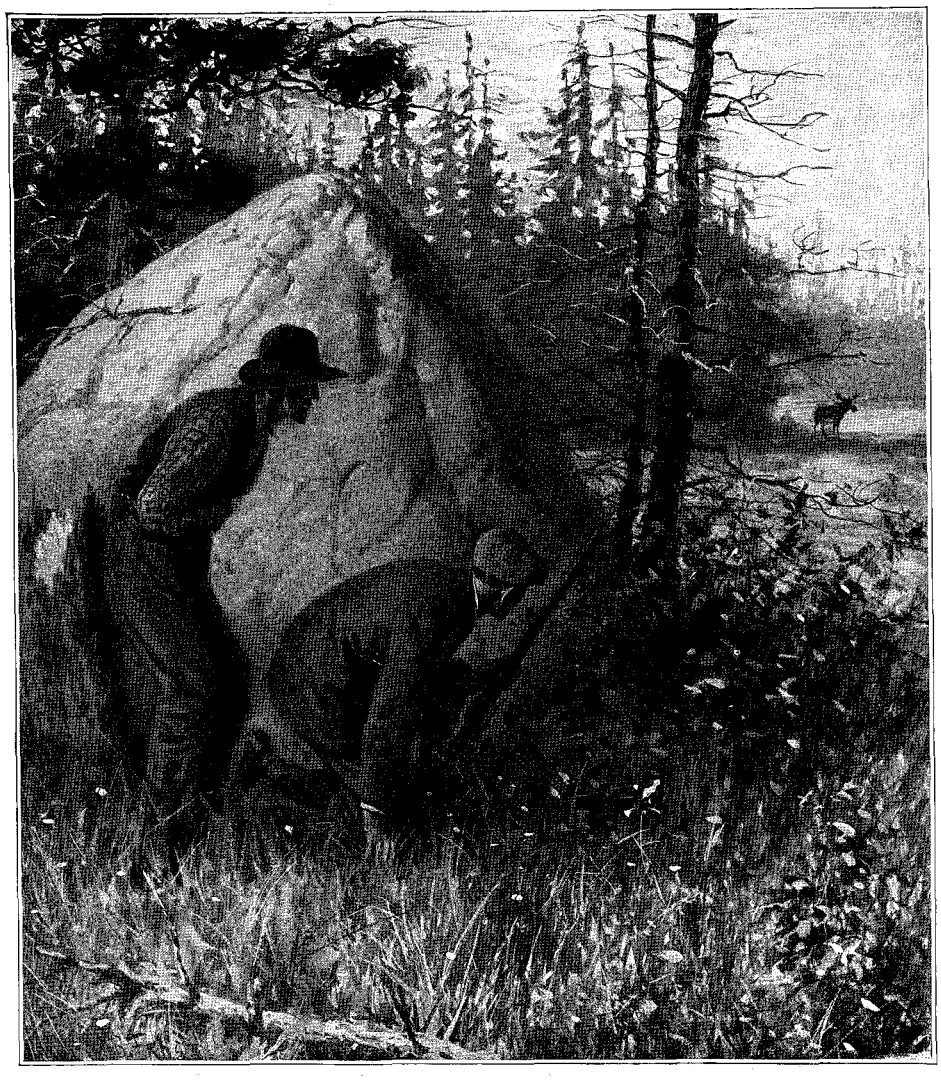

His antlers were not record ones.—Page 186.

yet meat in camp; I didn't want to slay this small thing. I turned my head and whispered:

"It's a measly little cow caribou. I don't want it."

"It is a red deer, m'sieur," Josef whispered back. "But as m'sieur wishes. *C'est bien.*"

With that the lady in question heard. She stopped short and sniffled and stared excitedly about—saw us. She took notice a second with interest, stretching an abnormally long and slender neck over the bushes to see better. Josef and I froze. The *jeune fille* was calmed; turned again to her breakfast. Then I whispered another unflattering sentence about her looks, and she jumped and kicked up her heels skittishly, and flirted with us out of one eye, and then whirled and danced straight down to the edge of the water thirty feet from the canoe. She stood there a full half-minute devoured with curiosity, stretching all that length of neck, wiggling her sensitive young nose, staring with all her eyes, the most alluring little wild beast I ever had the privilege of meeting. Then I laughed out-

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right and off went Miss Red Deer, kicking up heels, flashing white-lined tail, prancing away in high indignation. I wondered what that little deer person, in her dim little brain, thought about our outfit.

After that adventure Josef and I landed on a point of higher land jutting into the marsh and dividing it more or less in two. I sat by a rock with my back comfortably against a stump and watched the sun rise behind the mountains, for it was now five-thirty. And Josef sat back of me in the wood, almost invisible in his brownish clothes, stealing around a few yards now and then with his velvet step to watch every corner of that marsh, yet mostly as still as the tree he leaned against. I looked at my watch at six-twenty-five, and as I put it back I got the surprise of my life—a combination surprise. From the wood back of me, where Josef sat in silence, rang out brazenly the unhurried, unchokable whir of Walter's alarm-watch, the most absolutely unfitting sound, short of a dinner-gong, that human ears might listen to on a moose hunt. And at the identical moment, as if in response to his regular morning call, with a crash of kindling-wood *en passant*, there stepped out on the marsh the greatest old bull moose ever seen. His antlers—*panaches*—were not record ones, it turned out later, but to me at that moment they looked the height of the Singer Building. I crept to my feet as he proceeded from the opening in the forest, and even in that second of stress my subconsciousness was saying, though I didn't realize it till after, a scrap from Walter Scott that I learned as a kid:

> "It was a stag, a stag of ten,
> And he bore his antlers statelily
> As he came marching down the glen."

But that was subliminal; what I was aware of was that I cocked my rifle with my finger carefully on the trigger and said to myself:

"It's about a hundred and fifty yards; hold medium fine."

I held medium fine, and felt the variety of entire confidence that comes to one from heaven on top of a bolting horse. And fired. And by good luck down he went in his tracks, dead as a door-nail. Then, by ginger, was I excited? Rather. I joyfully popped off the three shots a minute apart which are the family signal of a kill, and in an astonishingly short time two canoes shot from the river and raced across to our marsh.

"Wallie, I forgive all your sins," I cried at him; and if you'll believe it he didn't more than take time to ask what I'd killed before he turned on me.

"Forgive! Who's doing the forgiving, I'd like to ask? Who let loose a hot-water bag and raised Cain with my blankets?"

"Not me," I grinned.

"Not you? I like that. Didn't you advise me——"

"Advise you! Now, Wallie, pet, is it grown-up or is it a baby boy? I suggested that hot-water bottle. I didn't know its Margaret furnished it with cracked hot-water bottles, did I? Anyhow, wasn't it for you to review and judge that hot-water bottle? Anyhow, did I know——"

"That'll do, you young cuss," cut in Walter. "Psychological revenge I got in any case with that early dawn," and he grinned a yard.

"Yes, speaking of forgiving," said I. "Gee, was I sleepy when you raked me out at eleven-thirty! Gee, was I cold getting dressed by that moonlight! And you sleeping like a baby! *You'll* forgive *me*, you old chump, will you?"

And I shouted a shout and leaped on him, for I was happy enough about that moose to see the joke now. The camp was then given over to butchery, and in two hours that immense brute, one thousand two hundred pounds, was reduced to meat and hide and horns. We sent two men back to Lac Lumière with instructions to travel with hunks of venison to two or three other camps, while we forged ahead to discover Lac Pouce-Long.

We broke camp on Lac aux Écorces after lunch. Clouds were coming up, and in half an hour it began to rain. It suddenly continued to rain. We put on raincoats and plugged along. Then the skies fell down. We plugged along. Walter intended to discover Pouce-Long; moreover, there was nothing else to do, for our happy home on Lac Lumière was far, far away. So we plugged from lake

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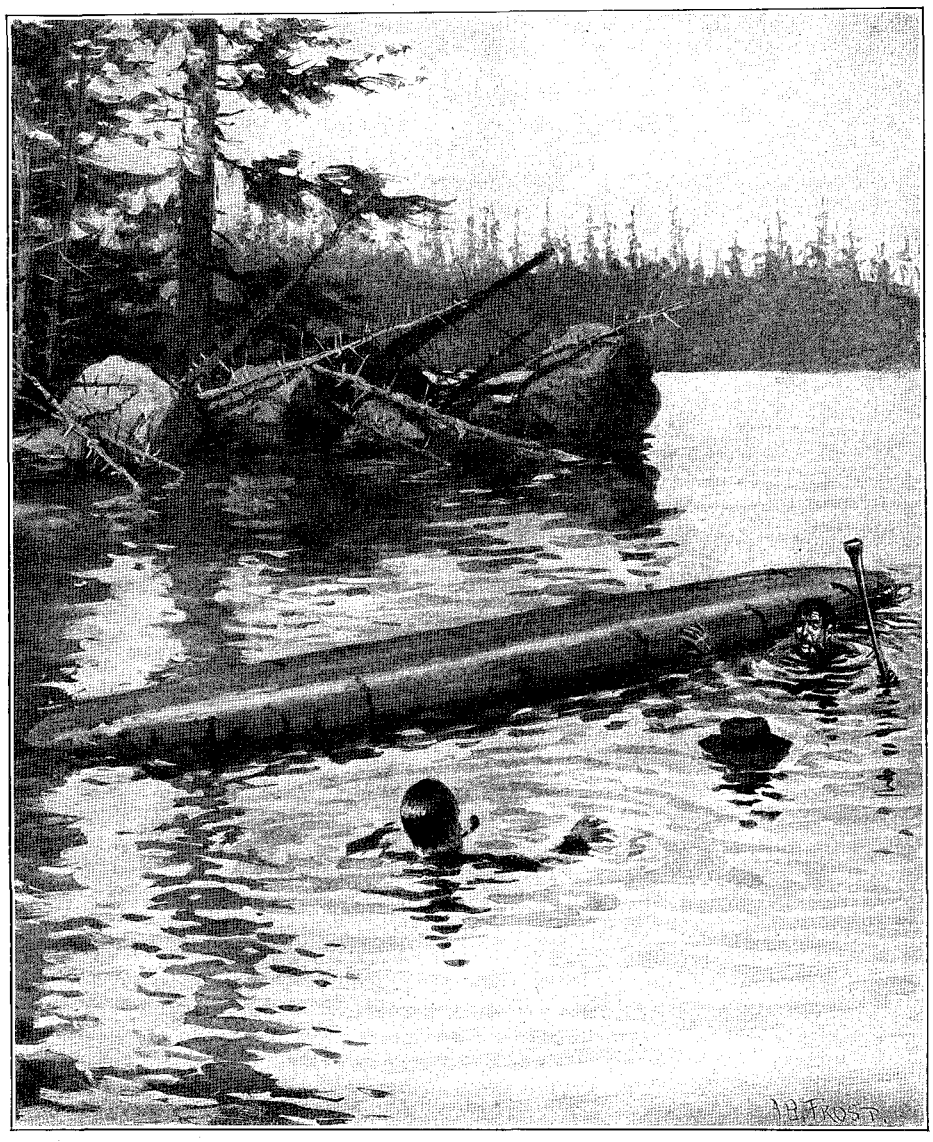

When they came up the pipes were yet gripped in their teeth, such is the hold of that vile weed.—Page 188.

to lake, through muddy portage after muddy portage. We hit quite a large body of water, at which I looked longingly, thinking that it made a perfectly good Pouce-Long for my taste, and about then it got to be high time to make camp, and with that the skies doubled up and fell on us with kicks and screams and torrents. We were on the water at that moment, and through the streams of drink you couldn't see one blessed shore or landmark, and Josef had the only compass and had arranged to get water in it. Compasses with water in them do not work. So there we were, with no idea of where we were, on a stormy ocean. But Walter had kept tabs on the lakes, and when the rain abated so we could see or hear each other he announced from his canoe that the very next was Lac Pouce-Long, and that it was only a quarter of a mile up the inlet according to that born liar André, and that we would proceed to go on to advance to Lac Pouce-Long.

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I pleaded to camp on this present God-forsaken spot, whatever it might be, and the guides looked yearning, but the boss consulted nobody and was firm. Everybody and everything, he pointed out, was as wet as he or it was going to be; he had intended to make Pouce-Long that night; he still intended to make Pouce-Long that night.

"On faisait celà," he announced to the men in his own peculiar French. "On faisait celà. On va."

We went. There wasn't any portage, as André said away back, from the lake before Pouce-Long to Pouce-Long; it was necessary to travel up the inlet. We wandered about that strange pond in mist and rain, having altogether lost in the flood all bearings as to where we came in, and at last we hit on an inlet. The funeral procession worked up the small stream in boats, and Walter stumbled in landing from his boat, as he always stumbles everywhere, and plunged into awful goo up over his boots. That cheered me considerably. We set off, packs and canoes and all, through distinctly poor country, one guide ahead with an axe clearing a way for the other guide with one canoe, and Walter and *moi* following with little small talk. We had a load apiece, which Walter does not care for.

Thus we wended, all because of Walter's pig-headed determination to make Pouce-Long that night, where there were schools of salmon. We wended in that order for one hour solid—being André's idea of a quarter of a mile—and then there was water through trees, and I yelped:

"Thalassa!"

Very late in the afternoon we made camp. Now, when things are as bad as that the only possible choice is to shoot yourself or pretend it's funny. We pretended, and pretty soon it was. The ground was sponge, and a million dollars a pound would not have bought dry balsam for beds, but we got fires going and laughed at the wet blankets, and then there was supper, and food certainly is a present help in time of trouble. So, with sizzling bacon and fried potatoes and hot tea and flapjacks and other delicatessen, including much laughter at nothings, one felt comforted.

It was too late to fish, or else, Walter assured us, we would have had four-pound trout for dinner. He got into his blankets murmuring how he would take such rushing up to the fly like "school on salmons" the next morning. There were no adventures that night but the great nightly adventure of sleep. Lots of that. And the morning dawned as calm and bright and blameless as if the land of Pouce-Long had never heard of cloudbursts.

We had breakfast lazily around eight-thirty, and immediately after out went Walter *en canot* with Gros-Louis for his salmonettes, mourning that the sun shone. Yet André had stated that the four-pounders rushed all the same at midday in blazing sunshine, so he went with confidence. I, having done my stunt the day before, loafed about camp and lay on pine-needles, and read Benvenuto Cellini and browsed on sweet chocolate.

Till suddenly there were loud sounds, a canoe being paddled with swishes, a keel grinding hard into the shore, *du monde* debarking on rocks, murmurs of distressfulness. The atmosphere was wrong; I sprang from my pious leisure and started to the landing; in six steps I was confronted with my brother, a figure of sorrow, hastening. Lake water dripped volubly from him; his face was grievous; his teeth chattered like a typewriter. He stared at me, indignant, reproachful; then:

"Give me something hot," ordered Walter lordlily.

I flew. When he had it, and had applied it, I asked questions.

"What the dickens?" I asked.

He explained. It seems he had been fishing, sitting in the canoe facing Gros-Louis in the stern. It struck him that he could fish better facing the bow, so he rose up without a hint to Gros-Louis, as is his imperial way, and slewed around. He caught his foot in a rib of the boat—he never misses a chance to be awkward, as I pointed out—and tipped the boat over. The water was about over their heads, so they swam a few strokes and waded in. Both he and Gros-Louis were smoking pipes when they went under, and when they came up the pipes were yet gripped in their teeth, such is the hold of

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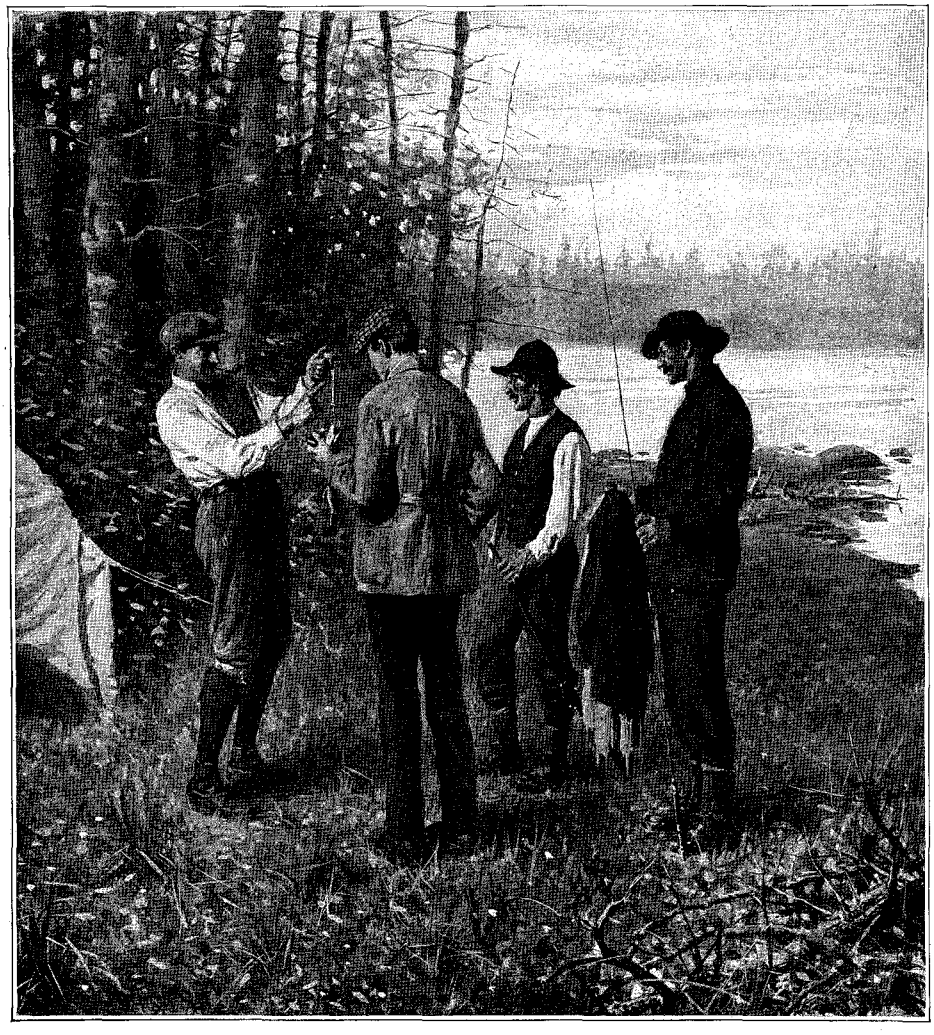
that vile weed. But the rifle and a Leonard rod and a sweater and Gros-Louis's coat were deposited at the bottom of the sea. Walter regretted that, but his real grief was not for rifle or rod or apparel.

He mourned this way, chanting the saga of a fish that had sunk and would never come up again. Or so he thought. But when, with some trouble, we had got him dried and encased in fuzzy extra



He weighed exactly one pound and three-quarters.—Page 190.

"Bob," he assured me, "that fish I'd just taken was a whale. It was a whale. I'll say it weighed four pounds because I want to keep inside the mark—but, Bob!" Words failed him. "It was a whale, Bob. If that fish weighed an ounce, it weighed six pounds. But I'll say four, Bob. Put it at four, just to be well inside the mark."

ones, and a layer of shirt and trewsies, it came to him that a thirty-five-dollar Ross rifle and a three-and-one-sixteenth-ounce Leonard rod were worth a try at salvaging. So we ordered out a detachment of Josef and Gros-Louis—also dried and reupholstered—and told them to go down to the sea in a ship and see what they could do about it.

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Just as we were getting hungry for lunch they appeared back, bearing rod and gun, as good as ever, with a little fussing. And the fish. That was a surprise to my brother Walter. I saw his jaw drop as he regarded that unexpected bonus from the deep. I sprang with a howl of unholy joy for that limp trout and dré's zigzag tongue had drawn for big brother was only a vision. When, after fishing more or less all day in this, his Pouce-Long, the record was sixteen under a pound and the fish-that-came-back-from-the-dead. Walter was suddenly very disgusted.

"We'll start home early to-morrow," he

The yellow-green paper off a block of chocolate.—Page 191.

with the other leg I sprang for the fish-scales, and I weighed him. He weighed exactly one pound and three-quarters. Exactly. Walter murmured things about losing weight lying in the water, but what were such piffling wiggles? That tale I have to hold over my legal brother for the term of his natural life.

As for the "school on salmons" it didn't materialize. The sky clouded, and still it didn't materialize. A number of half-pounders and such we took with middling ease, but the vision that André's announced at the evening meal, while the candles in birch-bark holders flared over our simple board and the half-pounders sizzled merrily where Josef squatted by the fire. "We'll start home after breakfast. We've discovered Pouce-Long, and I don't think much of it, and André's a damned liar."

So the next morning early we packed up and flopped down the tents and chopped out the fires, sighing comfortably as we thought of the luxurious log cabin on Lac Lumière and wondering if we could pos-

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sibly make the back track in a day. We paddled down to the outlet which we had followed up so painfully in that pelting rain two days before, and which we hadn't been near since. And, just as we got almost to it, Gros-Louis, who was in the bow, suddenly stopped paddling. He stared as if petrified at something in the bush back from the shore.

"*Qu'est-ce vous voyerez?*" demanded Walter in good American French. "*Est-ce que vous voyerez un perdu!*"

Which is what he mostly calls a partridge, a "*perdrix.*" With that the boat had drifted forward six feet, and Josef in the stern began to laugh out loud. He seldom does that. I was staring, too, into the bush, and all of a sudden I saw a blaze. A blaze! That means, you see, the beginning of a portage, a cut trail. And we were supposed to be on Lac Pouce-Long, to which there was not and never had been a trail cut. Josef twisted the nose of the boat, and we all piled out, astounded and curious. Sure enough there was a perfectly good trail, about twenty yards from the outlet, parallel, broadly speaking, with the outlet.

"What the devil does this mean?" demanded Walter with righteous indignation, and with that I squealed and pounced on something on the moss back of a tree. A bit of silver foil, and beyond it the yellow-green paper off a block of chocolate. We stared at it and at each other, and then light broke.

Do you see? We'd got turned around in the cloudburst and lost our bearings, and in place of going on to Pouce-Long we'd taken the back track to the lake we'd just left—doubled on ourselves. Only, instead of doubling with the perfectly good portage, we'd fought, bled, and died following up the stream to what we fondly thought was Pouce-Long, with a portage twenty yards from us all the time. So we'd been fishing on some mess of a pond without a name and without much fish, and at that moment we were hitting the trail to Heaven knows what puddle, where we'd stopped to munch chocolate two days before. My legal brother Walter was some fussed. He started to be peevish, but it wasn't any use; he had to laugh. No more was it possible to go back and find the real Pouce-Long, for the necessities of life were giving out. While it's all very well saying "Give us the luxuries and we will dispense with the necessities," that doesn't work in the woods. With a fair groundwork of salt pork and potatoes a person can dispense with winter clothing, maybe, in hot weather. But yank out foundations like pork, and luxuries like trout don't cover the ground.

We didn't wait long to start back to Lac Lumière. And, because on that voyage of adventure we hadn't exactly got there, we still have on the ice of our memories, keeping it nice and fresh, a package carefully labelled for next year's use, and the label on that package is: "The Discovery of Pouce-Long."

THE DESERTED HOUSE

By Albert Bigelow Paine

HUSHED voices of the summer winds that pass;
Vague dimness on the vacant window-sill;
Decay, and silence—these are death, and still
Something there is of presence in the air:
The sentient grace of her who planted there
The flowers that choke amid the tangled grass.

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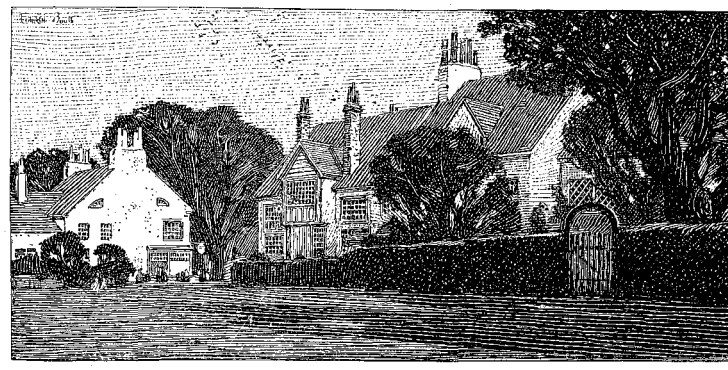

BATTLEDORE AND SHUTTLECOCK

By Amy Lowell

Decorations by Franklin Booth

The shuttlecock soars upward
In a parabola of whiteness,
Turns,
And sinks to a perfect arc.
Plat! the battledore strikes it,
And it rises again,
Without haste,
Winged and curving,
Tracing its white flight
Against the clipped hemlock trees.
Plat!
Up again,
Orange and sparkling with sun,
Rounding under the blue sky,
Dropping,
Fading to grey-green
In the shadow of the coned hemlocks.

"Ninety-one." "Ninety-two." "Ninety-three."
The arms of the little girls
Come up—and up—
Precisely,
Like mechanical toys.
The battledores beat at nothing,
And toss the dazzle of snow
Off their parchment drums.
Ninety-four. Plat!
Ninety-five. Plat!

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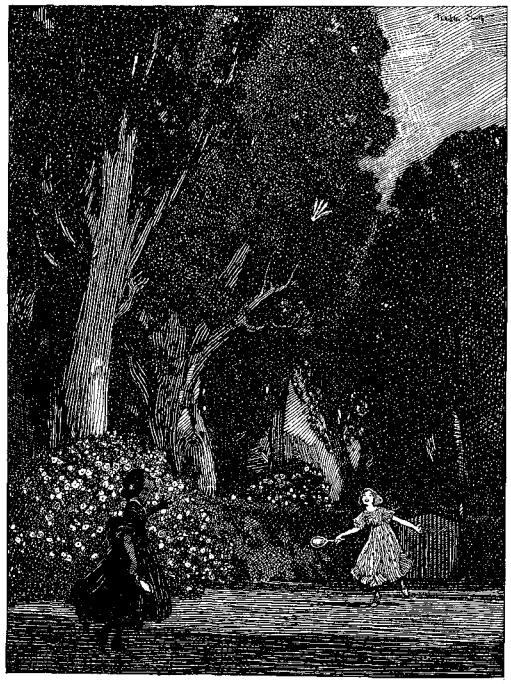
Back and forth
Goes the shuttlecock,
Icicle-white,
Leaping at the sharp-edged clouds,
Overturning,
Falling,
Down,
And down,
Tinctured with pink
From the upthrusting shine
Of Oriental poppies.

The little girls sway to the counting rhythm:
Left foot,
Right foot.
Plat! Plat!
Yellow heat twines round the handles of the battledores,
The parchment cracks with dryness;
But the shuttlecock
Swings slowly into the ice-blue sky,
Heaving up on the warm air



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Like a foam bubble on a wave,
With feathers slanted and sustaining.
Higher,
Until the earth turns beneath it;
Poised and swinging,
With all the garden flowing beneath it,
Scarlet, and blue, and purple, and white—
Blurred color reflections in rippled water—
Changing—streaming—
For the moment that Stella takes to lift her arm.
Then the shuttlecock relinquishes,
Bows,
Descends;
And the sharp blue spears of the air
Thrust it to earth.

Again it mounts,
Stepping up on the rising scents of flowers,
Buoyed up and under by the shining heat.
Above the foxgloves,
Above the guelder-roses,
Above the greenhouse glitter,
Till the shafts of cooler air
Meet it,
Deflect it,
Reject it,
Then down,
Down,
Past the greenhouse,
Past the guelder-rose bush,
Past the foxgloves.

"Ninety-nine," Stella's battledore springs to the impact.
Plat! Like the snap of a taut string.
"Oh! Minna!"
The shuttlecock drops zigzaggedly,
Out of orbit,
Hits the path,
And rolls over quite still.
Dead white feathers,
With a weight at the end.

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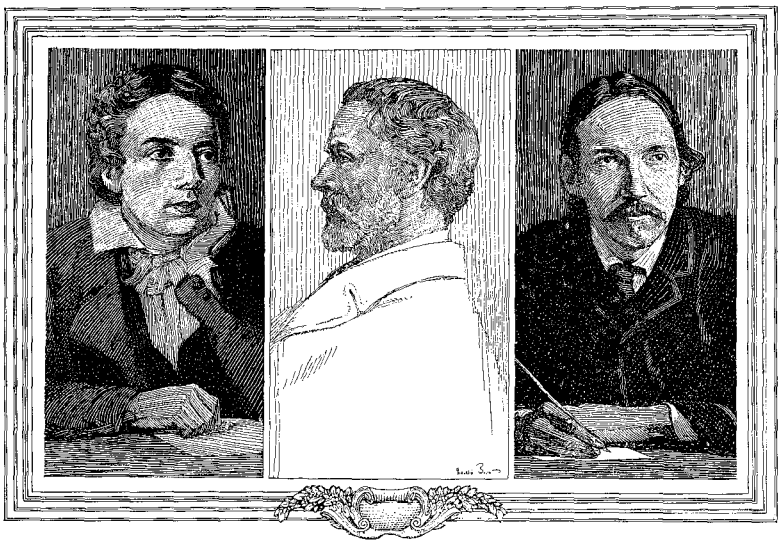

BOX HILL AND ITS MEMORIES

KEATS, MEREDITH, STEVENSON

By Sidney Colvin

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM PHOTOGRAPHS BY FREDERICK H. EVANS AND DRAWINGS BY A. G. CRAM

THE thoughts uppermost in these days in the mind of every Englishman must needs be thoughts of the world-war and of all its tremendous issues for his own country and for mankind. But those of us whom age or sex keeps from the field, and whose energies are not wholly given to services on behalf of our fighting forces, must needs, if we are not to give way under the stress of the time, have other thoughts to "interpose a little ease" and occupy at least a part of our minds. Those which have lately most occupied my own have been connected with a particular spot of English ground, and one by aspect and association dedicated above others to the sentiment of field enjoyment and repose. Many of my American readers no doubt know the place well. It is that beautiful bit of home scenery, the vale of Mickleham between Leatherhead and Dorking, where the creeping Mole winds and burrows its way between the great chalk scarp of Box Hill, part bare down and part shagged with boxwood and whitebeam and juniper scrub, on one side, and the richly timbered park lands of Norbury on the other. More particularly it is the point, just beneath the steep of the scarp, where the highway spans the stream at Burford Bridge and an ancient and much frequented roadside inn, with its garden and outbuildings, is ensconced close by. The main area of Box Hill, slopes and summit, has for years, with the consent of the owners of the soil, served in summer as a holiday jaunting-ground for van-loads of London schoolchildren and picnickers and beanfeasters; while the inn at its foot, and a certain cottage near by, have for lovers of letters and of genius been consecrated by associations, some long bygone and some recent, too intimate and deep to be effaced or much disturbed by any amount of such occasional and passing bustle. Lately there arose a danger threatening both the popular holiday uses of the site and the deeper and dearer associations it held for the few.

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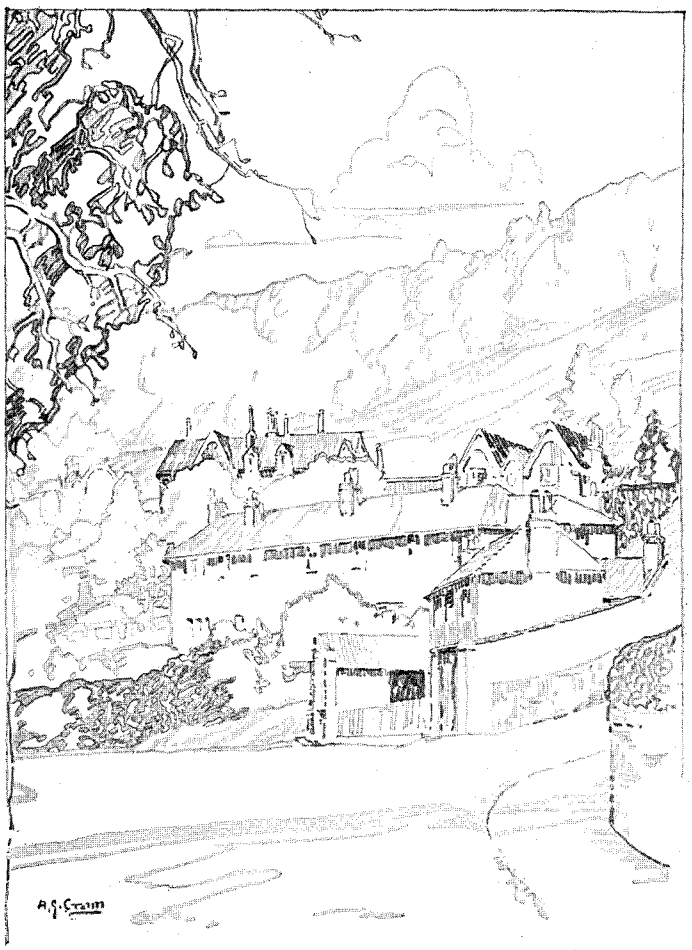
A day came when the land was thrown on the market by its owners and might have been acquired by the speculative builder, enclosed, or broken up. But a generous neighbor, the late Mr. Leopold Salomons, stepped in and bought it, and presently made it over to the National Trust for



Mickleham village.

That beautiful bit of home scenery, the vale of Mickleham between Leatherhead and Dorking. —Page 195.

Places of Historic Interest and National Beauty to hold for the public in perpetuity.

On the original initiative of great enthusiasts and organizers like the late Miss Octavia Hill, the late Sir Robert Hunter, and Canon Rawnsley, the central and local committees of the National Trust have been enabled, at a relatively small cost of money though much of vigilant negotiation, and with the help of much private effort and generosity, to acquire and hold for the community many a site of spacious outlook from whence the sons and daughters of England, and their kindred and guests from overseas, will for ever be free to survey and drink in the beauty and variety of our island scenes and dilate their hearts with the effluence of poetry and ancientry that breathes from them. Tracts of moorland and wood and meadow beside Ulleswater or Derwentwater or Windermere, legend-haunted bays or headlands of Cardigan or Cornwall, patches of primitive East Anglian fen-

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land never touched by the spade or plough, heathery or grassy or pine-clad expanses of our Surrey or Kentish hills,—some of all these we have secured already, and with them such a monument of primeval worship as the Druid Circle near Keswick, such a haunt of literary memories as the cottage in the Quantocks where Coleridge wrote 'The Ancient Mariner' and 'Christabel' and 'Kubla Khan,' and a good sprinkling, up and down the country, of remains of ancient civic or manorial architecture that were or would soon have been in risk of demolition. These things are only a beginning. There is very much more yet to be acquired and made safe. But even through the stress of war we who have worked for and with the Trust may think with pleasure of what has so far been done in this kind: and one of the best and latest of our acquisitions, as I have indicated, has been that of the familiar wooded crest and open declivities of Box Hill.

But the reasons which have drawn my thoughts so much toward the site have been only in part connected with the fact of its acquisition by the Trust. They have been also, and in two different ways, dependent on special work on which I have been engaged. I have been doing my best, for one thing, to get right a certain chapter in a critical biography of the poet Keats which I have had long in preparation, the chapter in which he finishes 'Endymion' and writes certain lyrics the true dates of which have been lately for the first time ascertained. For another and separate thing, I have been trying to recall and fix, before it should be too late, my personal memories of a man of genius who is as likely to be interesting to a far-off future as to ourselves: I mean George Meredith. Now it happens that in the weeks when Keats was writing the last part of the last book of 'Endymion' and the lyrics in question, that is from soon after mid-November to early in December 1817, he was staying at that same wayside inn by Burford Bridge under Box Hill. And a cottage a quarter of a mile away, sheltered in a wooded nook at the foot of the main track that mounts the hill, was for the last forty years of his life the home of George Meredith.

Add to these a third and to me even more attaching association. Robert Louis Stevenson stayed at the Burford Bridge Inn four times, first with his parents in 1878, when he wrote there the early part of the 'New Arabian Nights' (the Suicide Club chapters) and when, sensitively and shyly, not without fear of a rebuff, he sought leave to pay Meredith that homage of a beginner to a master which laid the foundation of their friendship. In the garden of a common friend they were invited to meet almost daily for several weeks, and Stevenson, who could be as engaging in deference as he was brilliant and stimulating in challenge, soon completely won the affection of his senior. It was on this occasion that I myself met Meredith for the first time: I remember how, having gone down to Box Hill for an afternoon, I was introduced to him across a stile or field-gate to which he had come up with the two Stevensons, Louis and Bob, at the end of a twelve mile walk: a thing of which Louis was well capable in those days, before his journey to California, but never afterwards. Stevenson was there again with his wife in 1881 and 1882, and for the last time in August 1886, a year before he left England never to return. When Meredith first planned his novel, 'The Amazing Marriage,' he meant to make one of its characters, Gower Woodseer, in some measure a portrait of R. L. S., but changed his purpose in the execution, and scarce a trace of likeness remains.

There was that about the place, apart from its illustrious neighborhood, which drew Stevenson for its own sake and set his imagination working. The Suicide Club stories, though written there, had of course nothing to do with the sentiment of the scene: they had been conceived in nocturnal prowls about London. But some years later Stevenson coupled the Burford Bridge Inn with the Hawes Inn at Queen's Ferry on the Forth as a place made for adventure and thrilling with suggestions of potential romance. His words are well known:—

"I have lived both at the Hawes and Burford in a perpetual flutter, on the heels, as it seemed, of some adventure that should justify the place; but though the feeling had me to bed at night and called

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me again at morning in one unbroken round of pleasure and suspense, nothing befell me in either worth remark. The man or the hour had not yet come; but some day, I think, a boat shall put off from the Queen's Ferry, fraught with a dear cargo, and some frosty night a horseman, on a tragic errand, rattle with his whip upon the green shutters of the inn at Burford."

The hope was realized as to Queen's Ferry, but never as to Burford Bridge. I imagine the attempt would have been made in connection with his projected tale, 'Jerry Abershaw,' at one time eagerly planned but never brought even so far into being as that other highway story, 'The Great North Road,' which remains so tantalizing a fragment in his work.

Near the end of last November, just before the twenty-first anniversary of Stevenson's death, I spent the sunset hour of a chill autumnal day wandering about that familiar and haunted scene. The weather had just cleared after storm: above the steep shoulder of the down a perfect half-moon hung in a sky of faint lilac shading into pure pearl-green: the darkened valley woods were of a deep misty brown touched here and there almost into crimson by the last lingering flames of autumn: the hills closing the valley southwestward stood purple and translucent like amethyst. The rich, solemnly glowing colors of the scene, with the tingling chill of the season, sent a thrill through one's blood and nerves intensifying the memories and associations of the place almost into actual presences, hauntings with which the very air seemed to vibrate.

I have said how Keats spent here the last ten days of November and the first week or more of December 1817. He was then just past his twenty-second birthday, and had been at work for seven months on 'Endymion.' Beginning the poem at Carisbrooke in the Isle of Wight on April the 18th or 19th, he had written:—

> O may no wintry season, bare and hoary,
> See it half finished: but let Autumn bold,
> With universal tinge of sober gold,
> Be all about me when I make an end.

His prayer was all but granted: the autumn had not yet passed, though it was just passing, into winter when he wrote the last lines of the poem. The first book had been written between Carisbrooke, Margate, Canterbury, and Hampstead, and finished by mid-June; the second at Hampstead between mid-June and late August; the third during a six weeks' stay with a friend at Oxford ending on the 1st of October; the fourth and last again principally at Hampstead, until he came to Burford Bridge "to change the scene—change the air"—so he wrote to a friend—"and give me a spur to wind up my poem, of which there are wanting five hundred lines."

Keats dearly loved a valley: he loved even the mere names denoting one. In his marginal notes to a copy of 'Paradise Lost' he gave a friend we find the following:—

> "Or have ye chosen this place
> After the toil of battle to repose
> Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find
> To slumber here, as in the vales of Heaven?

There is a cool pleasure in the very sound of vale. The English word is of the happiest chance. Milton has put vales in heaven and hell with the very utter affection and yearning of a great Poet. It is a sort of Delphic Abstraction—a beautiful thing made more beautiful by being reflected and put in a Mist. The next mention of Vale is one of the most pathetic in the whole range of Poetry:—

> Others, more mild,
> Retreated in a silent valley, sing
> With notes angelical to many a harp
> Their own heroic deeds and hapless fall
> By doom of battle.

How much of the charm is in the 'valley'!"

There speaks, from his inmost self, a poet of another poet and as if to and for poets, deep calling unto deep. But in his everyday vein of speech or writing Keats was always reticent in regard to the scenery of places he visited, disliking nothing more than the glib ecstasies of the tourist in search of the picturesque. When he has looked round him in his new quarters at Burford Bridge he says simply: "I like this place very much. There is Hill and

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Dale and a little River. I went up Box Hill this evening after the moon—'You a' seen the moon'—came down and wrote some lines."

All lovers of English poetry are by this time aware—though it took several generations of readers to find out—that in 'Endymion' Keats has turned the old Grecian moon-myth into a parable of the striving of the poetic soul in man to enter into full communion with the spirit of essential Beauty in the world. The moon with her magic, under her classic names Cynthia or Phœbe, is for Keats the symbol of that essential principle of beauty: the shepherd prince Endymion is the incarnation of the passion which makes all poets long to be taken into the very heart and inmost sanctuary of beauty. It is this symbolic intention which furnishes the only adequate clew to guide us through the mazes of the poem, its bewildering, teeming, unpruned intricacies of invention and detail.

Two main theories or convictions, both quite simple in themselves, dictate and control the general course of the adventures which the poet devises for his hero. One is that the soul enamoured of and striving for union with essential Beauty cannot achieve its quest by pursuing it in solitude and selfishness, but only after being first purified and taken out of itself by active sympathy with the lives and sufferings of others. This is a doctrine held as strongly by Keats as by Shelley, and inspired, or at least fortified, in them both by the teaching of Wordsworth. The whole of the third book of 'Endymion' is occupied in enforcing it by telling how the hero, surprised into self-forgetfulness by sympathy with the sage and sea-god Glaucus under the afflictions laid upon him by Circe, is enabled to break her spells and for his reward is endowed by the sage with all his own dear-bought treasures of mystic knowledge and experience; and how, thus endowed, he finds that he can work miracles of joy and deliverance for his fellow creatures.

The other leading idea or tenet underlying the poetic luxuriance of 'Endymion' is that the instinctive love of the poet for all and each of the manifold different and dispersed beauties of things and beings upon earth is in its nature identical with the passion for that one transcendental and essential Beauty. Hence the various divine or human love-adventures which befall the hero in dreams or in reality, and seem to lure him away from his supreme quest and make him unfaithful to it, are shown in the end to have been no infidelities but only so many attractions exercised by his one celestial mistress in various disguises. The last part of the fourth book, the part which Keats wrote at Burford Bridge, is given to the final clearing-up and solution of this mystery. Endymion, having fallen in love with an Indian damsel whom he finds strayed from the train of Bacchus and forsaken in the forest, is distracted at thinking himself false to Cynthia the moon-goddess, the divine object of his quest. He and his new earthly love are carried by hippogriffs on an aerial flight among the constellations, to the near neighborhood of the enthroned Cynthia herself, the conflict of the two passions disturbing and bewildering him all the while: then he is swept down to earth again, and passionately determines to abandon his superhuman quest and devote himself humbly to the joys of a country life in the company of his earthly love:—

> There never liv'd a mortal man, who bent
> His appetite beyond his natural sphere,
> But starv'd and died. My sweetest Indian, here,
> Here will I kneel, for thou redeemèd hast
> My life from too thin breathing.

But she, being in truth no other than Cynthia in a mortal disguise, cannot accept this future either for her lover or for herself, and a long passage ensues in which they both plan schemes of renunciation, she to become a votaress in the temple of Diana, he to lead a hermit life in the forest, visited only by his sister: until at the last moment the supposed Indian maiden suddenly dispels all clouds by throwing off her lendings and revealing herself for what she is:—

> And as she spake, into her face there came
> Light, as reflected from a silver flame:
> Her long black hair swell'd ampler, in display
> Full golden; in her eyes a brighter day
> Dawn'd blue and full of love. Aye, he beheld
> Phœbe, his passion!

And so the quest is ended, and the mystery solved: Endymion's earthly passion,

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born of human pity and desire, was one all the while, had he but known it, with his heavenly passion born of poetic aspiration and the soul's thirst for Beauty. The mortal love had been needed to humanize the celestial, the celestial to consecrate and spiritualize the mortal; the two passions at their height and perfection are inseparable, and the crowned poet and the crowned lover are one.

These were the matters we have to conceive as occupying Keats's thoughts, these the symbolic feelings and doings he was putting into verse, while he trod the airy ridges of the Surrey down, looking out with the lustrous eyes and eager forward and upward thrust of the head which his friends and the portraits tell of, or strolled brooding under the stripped elms and poplars by the river side. It is to be noted that all this closing part of 'Endymion' is written in a distinctly minor key, and that even the final solution brings no such outburst of joy and triumph as that which ends the third book, when the poet-hero finds himself endowed with the magical gifts and powers of the seer whom he has befriended. Is this because Keats had tired of his task before he came to the end, and his inventive faculties really needed the "spur" of which he speaks? Or because the low critical opinion which he had been gradually forming of his own poem took the heart out of him, so that as he drew near the goal he involuntarily let his mind run on the hindrances and misgivings which beset the poetic aspirant on his way to victory more than on the victory itself? His letters written in these days show him to have been deeply thoughtful indeed, but on the whole in good heart, and not suffering from any of his moods of constitutional depression. No doubt the ideas of renunciation he makes Endymion discuss with the Indian damsel and his sister could hardly be expressed otherwise than sadly. And no doubt also the spirit of the season helped in some degree to throw a cast of autumnal melancholy over his verse. Here are passages we can feel to be steeped in the sentiment of the Surrey valley and stream-side in late November:—

The Carian
No word return'd: both lovelorn, silent, wan,
Into the vallies green together went.
Far wandering, they were perforce content
To sit beneath a fair lone beechen tree;
Nor at each other gaz'd, but heavily
Por'd on its hazel cirque of shedded leaves.

And again:—

At this he press'd
His hands against his face, and then did rest
His head upon a mossy hillock green,
And so remain'd as he a corpse had been
All the long day; save when he scantly lifted
His eyes abroad, to see how shadows shifted
With the slow move of time,—sluggish and weary
Until the poplar tops, in journey dreary,
Had reach'd the river's brim. Then up he rose,
And slowly as that very river flows,
Walk'd towards the temple grove with this lament:
'Why such a golden eve? The breeze is sent
Careful and soft, that not a leaf may fall
Before the serene father of them all
Bows down his summer head below the west.
Now am I of breath, speech, and speed possest,
But at the setting I must bid adieu
To her for the last time. Night will strew
On the damp grass myriads of lingering leaves,
And with them shall I die; nor much it grieves
To die, when summer dies on the cold sward.'

That point about making, as it were, a dial-hand of a certain group of poplars with their moving shadows would have a special local interest if one could find the place which suggested it. The sun sets early in this valley in the winter. I know not if there is any group of trees still standing that could be watched thus lengthening out its afternoon shadow to the river's edge.

Apart from the long poem 'Endymion,' there is a well-known lyric of Keats's which we have only lately learned on good evidence to have been written at this time and to breathe the spirit of the same place and season. This is the famous little "drear-nighted December" song, in which Keats re-embodies with new and seasonable imagery the ancient moral, echoed by Dante from Boethius and since Keats's time by Tennyson again from Dante, of the misery added to misery by the remembrance of past happiness. As we read the piece we can realize how it may well have been inspired by days when the overhanging trees beside the bridge had shed their last gold, and spars of ice were beginning to fringe the sluggish meanderings of the Mole.

Besides his occupation with his own poetry Keats found time in these Burford Bridge days to be intensely studying the

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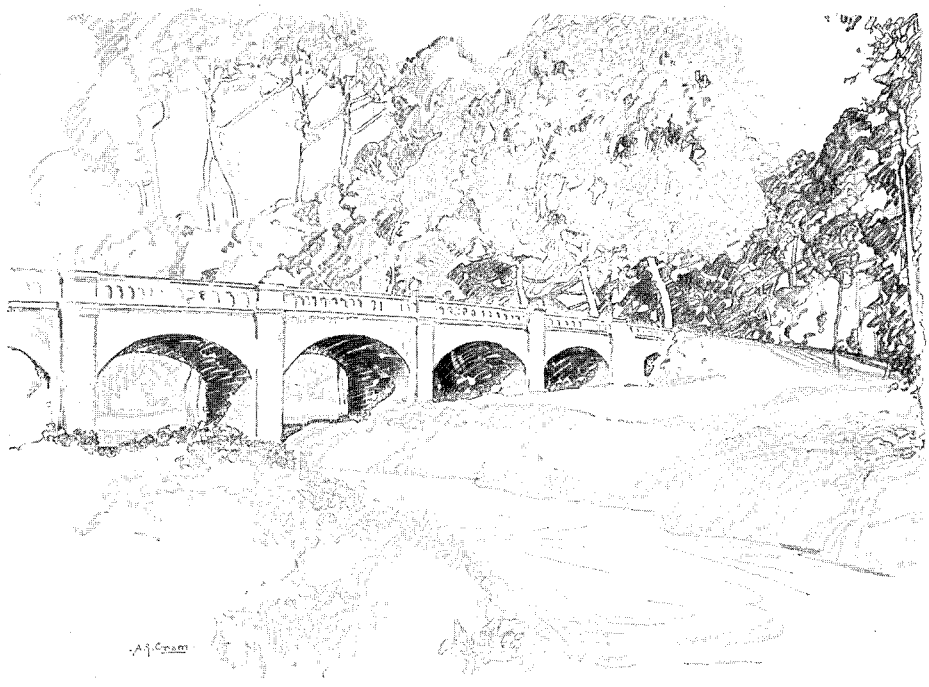
sonnets of Shakespeare, and writes to his friend Reynolds of new beauties he is constantly finding in them. To another friend, Benjamin Bailey, with whom he had lately been staying at Oxford, he sends on the same day a letter containing much interesting self-revelation and a whole chain of tentative, discursive, half-thought-out speculations or semi-speculations (to use a phrase of his own) on one

he writes of it as a place where Keats "did abide for a while, between one poem and another, conceiving, as I have fancied, a spot 'where damp moisture breeds The pipy hemlock to strange over-growth.'" This is a mistake: there are indeed plenty of plashy rank-herbaged spots beside the Mole which might well have suggested those lines to Keats: but as a matter of fact the hymn to Pan, where they occur,



Burford Bridge from the meadows.

Just beneath the steep of the scarp, where the highway spans the stream.—Page 195.

of his favorite themes, the power of imagination in discovering or actually creating the only vital kind of truth.

Into these I cannot now follow him. Another memory calls me, one nearer and not less compelling. It was in the late autumn of 1867, almost exactly half a century after Keats's stay at Burford Bridge, that George Meredith fixed his home at Flint Cottage a quarter of a mile away. The association with Keats, it may be noted, was one of the attractions the place presented to him. In the first letter I had from him inviting me there,

had been written some seven months before, in Thanet or perhaps at Canterbury.

Before settling here, Meredith knew the neighborhood well. He had lived for some years of his early youth near Weybridge, later for several more years near Esher, and mighty walker as he was, had in tramps at all hours of the day and night—by predilection round about the hour of dawn—come to know all the stretches of down and heather, all the valleys and water-meadows and steep woodlands, the roads and farm tracks and footways, of mid-Surrey, and the men and

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creatures frequenting them, with a familiarity such as scarcely any other man has possessed, a poet's intimacy at once ardently imaginative and minutely observant. Within a month or two after his settling into the cottage he writes to a friend: "Who could help flourishing here? I am every morning on the top of Box Hill—as its flower, its bird, its prophet. I drop down the moon on one side, I draw up the sun on t'other. I breathe fine air. I shout ha ha to the gates of the world. Then I descend, and know myself a donkey for doing it." It was here, either in the cottage itself or in the two-roomed chalet which he afterwards built in an upper corner of his garden, and from the windows of which, as he has told us, he loved to welcome the thrushes when they came in February to flute their prelude to the nightingales of April,—it was here that he wrote, as all the world knows, the whole succession of his middle and later novels: 'Harry Richmond' and 'Beauchamp's Career' and 'The Egoist' and 'Diana of the Crossways' and 'One of our Conquerors' and 'Lord Ormont' and 'The Amazing Marriage'; here also all his middle and later poetry: 'Poems and Lyrics of the Joy of Earth,' 'Ballads and Poems of Tragic Life,' 'A Reading of Earth,' 'A Reading of Life,' and the rest. More potent and strenuous labor of brain and heart together than those titles signify is hardly recorded of any man. During the first fifteen or more of this period of forty years neither his novels nor his poetry had any success with the public. Outside a narrow circle of friends and admirers he had few readers and none but harsh critics, and frugal as he was, had to live not by the exercise of his genius but by hack work as a journalist and publisher's reader. But the friends were stanch and the admirers keen: and the cottage at Box Hill was well frequented by an intimate circle of those who appreciated both the man and his work. Some men are repelled, others attracted, by a personality more powerful and shining than their own. To those whom such a personality attracts Meredith's physical activity, strength, and beauty, the exuberance and authority of his talk, with its singular blend of high courtesy and unsparing raillery, its brusque transitions from grave wisdom to riotous hyperbolical laughter, his eager interest in all phases of life, literature and politics, his stanchness, and at the same time sensitiveness, in friendship, his genial yet fastidious conviviality, made him the most impressive and stimulating of companions.

I was not one of Meredith's old friends or close comrades in these earlier days of his life at Box Hill. As I have said, I had shaken hands with him across a stile in 1878, but my intimacy did not begin till after the death of his second wife in 1885 and my own removal from Cambridge to take up work at the British Museum. The days of his neglect were then passing away. After the publication of 'The Egoist' and 'Diana of the Crossways' critics like Stevenson and Henley, with their zeal and energy and power of making themselves heard, had forced Meredith afresh upon the attention both of his own contemporaries and theirs; a still younger generation needed no convincing; American appreciation quickly followed; and so by degrees the enthusiasm of the few succeeded in making admiration for him a fashion with the many. At the same time his bodily, though not his intellectual, vigor was beginning in some degree to flag. The warm brown had faded from his hair and beard and given place to the grizzled shade that went so well with his habitual, unvarying suit of soft gray set off by a bright scarlet tie. His voice had not at all lost—indeed it never lost—its strong virile timbre, nor his utterance its authoritative rotundity and fulness; for his speech was ever clear-cut and complete, and the fashion, growing, I fear, in our modern English conversation, of mumbling and muttering at one another from behind our teeth slurred half-articulate sounds instead of formed words, had no countenance from him. The range of his walks was beginning to be much narrowed, but he could still breast gallantly the hill that rose from just outside his garden gate; and it was only by slow degrees that the symptoms developed themselves of that malady which before the end was to cripple his lower limbs entirely.

From the twenty years of his later life during which Meredith used to make me

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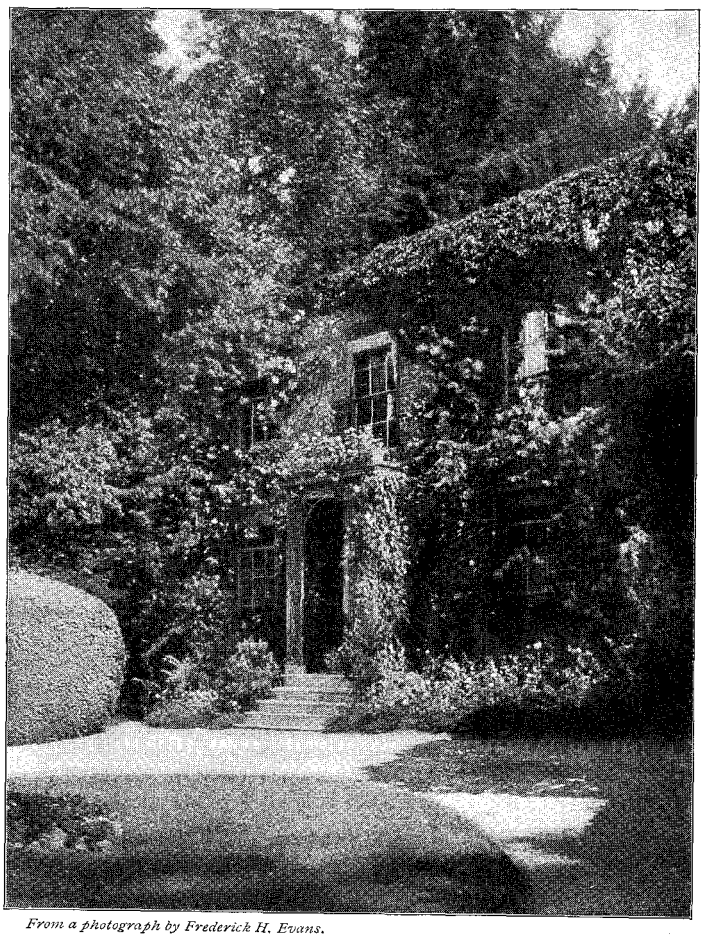
welcome whenever I liked to come, what do I chiefly remember? Well, I have never attempted to play the Boswell to anyone, being always, I suppose, too keen on trying to bear my own part. Nor do I think that any pains could ever have succeeded in Boswellizing Meredith. Remember that to make the one and only Boswell it took the one and only Johnson: the talker of all talkers, that is, most accustomed to deliver himself in brief, conclusive, as it were portable sentences, each rememberably laying down—say rather hammering down—the law on this or that question of life or conduct or opinion. Meredith's talk was not at all of that kind. He was fond, as all his readers know, of composing condensed oracular aphorisms like those of the Pilgrim's Scrip in 'Richard Feverel': but these were literary products, the fruits of hard meditation during solitary walks or in the study. His talk was above all things spontaneous, abundant, inventive, leaping and flinging itself from idea to idea and clause to clause. It ranged from lusty common sense to extravagances of the wildest, most voluble and exulting burlesque fantasy. The more overpowering of his monologues sprang sometimes from the mere overflow of animal and intellectual spirits: sometimes, before a mixed company which included strangers, I fear it must be owned that they gave an impres-



From a photograph by Frederick H. Evans.

Flint Cottage, Box Hill.

It was in the late autumn of 1867 that George Meredith fixed his home at Flint Cottage.—Page 201.

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sion of proceeding from a desire to show off and play fireworks. I do not think that impression was quite just. The truth is that Meredith cherished an ideal of what the brilliance of social intercourse ought to be which corresponded not at all to the capacities of ordinary persons but to the quite abnormal and super-athletic activities of his own brain.

He never fully realized the difference between his own mind and the minds of average people. In his novels he will often make characters described as ordinary talk like himself, in far-fetched tropes and epigrams, and they, being his creations, can only do as he bids them. But when in real life he would sometimes try to lift the talk of a commonplace company to his own intellectual and imaginative plane, the result was apt to be that he would be left discoursing alone to auditors silent and gaping, disconcerted or perhaps even annoyed. Among those who knew him well and could play up to him a similar strain of talk went better. One of his favorite diversions, when there were three or four friends, men or women or both, gathered about him was to begin bantering one of them for the entertainment of the rest. I can see him now standing on the hillside, leaning a little back against his stick, surrounded by such a group, and having singled out his subject setting out to attribute to him or her a part in some absurd imaginary conversation, or preposterous series of predicaments or adventures, exulting in the riot of his own invention as he went along, till he towered into heights of burlesque beyond conception. And yet, at his wildest, he would be apt to get in shrewd touches of real insight into the character, and it may be the weaknesses, of the person thus played upon. Vanity might suffer under the play: indeed vanity was never much at ease in Meredith's company. To give any sign of pique or resentment was fatal: little mercy would then be shown you: the only safe course was to go all the way with him, to enter into the spirit of his inventions and if possible burlesque his burlesque, when he would be delighted with you and himself, and throw back his beautiful head, and crow with his great manly laugh, and prolong the talk in high good humor, descending by easy degrees into the vein of genial and equal companionship.

So much for his company talk. But of course it was when one had him to oneself or at most with one or two intimates that one got him at his true best. The range of his moods and manners in such intimacy was very wide, and to me at least all of them were inspiriting and enjoyable save one. The prevailing strain was that blend I have already mentioned of the most open and affectionate courtesy with the frankest raillery, both somewhat elaborate of their kind. He would take and keep this tone with servants, whom it mystified beyond measure but none the less delighted, and who adored him. He would even take it with his pet dogs. I have noticed that the dogs of men of genius love them more passionately and devotedly than they love ordinary masters, I suppose feeling in them some extra glow and intensity of the emotional faculties calling for a response in kind. To the succession of black and tan or pure tan dachshunds given to Meredith by various friends, Coby and Bruny and Pete (for 'Cobold,' 'Bruno,' 'Peto'), and Islet, on whom he wrote his well-known elegy—to these it was a delight to hear him talking by the half-hour together in terms now of caressing endearment, now of irony, or sometimes, when the poaching instinct had proved too strong in any of them, of pained parental reproof.

It must not be supposed from what I have said that *badinage* or satire was at all times an element in Meredith's conversation. No man could be more gravely or more sagaciously sympathetic when the appeal for sympathy was made, or could put more of bracing life-wisdom into advice on matters of conduct when his advice was sought. To women (at least to the right kind of women, for with sentimentalists of either sex he had small patience), he could be the most chivalrous-hearted and tenderly understanding and honorably helpful of men, as beseemed the creator of Lucy Feverel and Rose Jocelyn and Renée and Clara Middleton, of Rhoda and Dahlia and Diana and the rest: his temper and discourse in these respects being in life and in literature entirely and admirably the same. In *tête*

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à tête intercourse he very rarely mounted the high intellectual or fantastic stilts, but would enter simply, with the power and incisiveness of a master but on perfectly free and equal terms, on almost any subject of human or historical or literary discussion. Out of many scores of conversations I can recall few that stand out saliently from the rest. Once, when I spoke of the impossibility of enjoying wild scenery in the company of a crowd of tourists, he fell upon me fiercely for the sin of selfish exclusiveness and fancied superiority to fellow beings as good as myself. I stood my ground and pushed him with questions: whether in point of fact the spiritual and imaginative effect of certain scenes did not depend essentially on their being visited in solitude: whether, for instance, the shores of a remote Highland loch could speak to one, when a packetful of MacBrayne's trippers had just been dumped upon them, as they spoke to one when one was alone: whether, if he himself went to one of his old haunts in Switzerland or Tirol and found a huge new block of hotel building disfiguring the scene at its most sensitive point, and pouring forth its crowd of cosmopolitan chatterers and loungers, he would not turn away in disappointment: whether, in fine, it was not one of the standing contrarieties of things, proving no good to be without its evil, that the modern poetic and romantic love of wild scenes and solitudes should have had, oftener than not, the practical effect of robbing the scenes of their wildness and the solitudes of their power upon the soul. In such discussions he would not be overbearing or unreasonable or use his resources merely to crush one, and I think on this occasion I got him to a half-way agreement.

Burford Bridge Inn.

Where Keats "did abide for a while, between one poem and another."—Page 201.

A very frequent subject of talk between us was on the duty and necessity for England of the obligation to national service. He conceived military training to be a thing desirable in every State, desirable

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for the sake of the manhood, the self-respect, the physical and moral health of its citizens, and desirable for ourselves above all people. He held that if our population would not shake off its carelessness and sloth, born of plethora, and submit to that discipline, as well as to other wholesome disciplines of mind and body, our only as a critic and onlooker. In discussions on England and her character and destinies he would always separate himself from his countrymen and say "You English." This attitude seemed to me to be due partly to the strong Celtic strain in his nature, his father having been of Welsh and his mother of Irish descent,

From a photograph by Frederick H. Evans.

Ham Farm, Weybridge.

Meredith . . . had lived for some years of his early youth near Weybridge.—Page 201.

day was done. He believed that a more sternly trained race like the Germans would surely win against us and deserve to win. These convictions at the same time did not shake his attachment to the Liberal party in the State, which almost to a man was fanatically opposed to them. When I urged that he should strive to convert his political friends and should in writing declare his mind on the question in terms more calculated to strike home than the cryptic utterances which he puts into the mouths of a Colney Durance or a Simeon Fenellan, he was apt to answer as though the matter were one which concerned him, not as one of ourselves, but partly to the sense of alienation from the sympathies of his countrymen that had been forced on him by their long neglect of his work. Dearly as he loved, and deeply beyond all men as he knew, the English soil, he would sometimes inveigh against defects of the English mind and character in the tone not only of a detached stranger but almost of an enemy. This from such a man, by that time at any rate recognized as one of the glories of our age and country, was the one thing that I used to find it hard to bear. The true key to his mind in the matter is perhaps to be found in his words written in 1870:—"I am neither German nor French, nor, unless the na-

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tion is attacked, English. I am European and Cosmopolitan,—for humanity! The nation which shows most worth is the nation I love and reverence." Nearly thirty years later, in one of his very last letters, he writes: "As to our country, if the people were awake, they would submit to be drilled. . . . The fear of imposing drill for at least a year seems to me a forecast of the national tragedy." Conceive what would have been his scorn for those who have shrieked against the duty of imposing national service even now, during these months of deadly peril to all that England stands for and holds dear.

Space fails me to speak of the many hours I have spent in hearing him read his own verse. Among the things I remember particularly his trying on me were those athletic experiments, not, I think, entirely successful, in the accentual treatment of classical quantitative metres, 'The Fall of Phaëton' and 'Translations from Homer.' I always thought the great ode on France written at the time of her overthrow in 1870, and foretelling for her such a spiritual resurrection as we have now witnessed, perhaps the finest political poem in our language, and was proportionately disappointed with the sense of strain and obscurity produced by the later odes on Napoleon and French history when he read them to me, then fresh written, in 1898. His tones in reading were impressively rotund, resonant, and masterful, but withal level and not much modulated, and in poems so close-packed and complicated in construction, so dense with imagery as these, the sense of what he read was naturally hard to follow. As a rule he courted no criticism and allowed for no difficulty; but one day I remember that he was more indulgent than usual. He paused to say how he knew some people found his poetry obscure, and to ask whether I did, and where, and why? I tried to point out some puzzles in his printed poems which I had failed to solve, even with the page before me and full leisure to study it. But he simply could not see that they were puzzles at all, and closed the talk characteristically with a jolly laugh over the sluggishness of my Saxon wits. In the course of it, defining his own aims and ideals in verse, he repeated several times with insistence, "Concentration and suggestion, Colvin, concentration and suggestion, those are the things I care for and am always trying for in poetry." It was a misfortune, I think, for his art, and probably for his hold on posterity, that theory should thus have come to reinforce and exaggerate habits of thought and style to which he was only too prone by instinct.

And so the years went by. Little by little infirmities gathered upon him, till at last he became incapable of walking and received one as a prisoner and a fixture to his armchair. He grew deaf and gradually deafer, so that to contribute any share of one's own to the talk became an effort, and one had more and more to be content with trying to convey to his hearing some suggestion that should stimulate him to monologue. But the intellect remained quite undimmed, the spirit quite unquenchable: his thirst for reading, and especially for French historical and biographical reading, abated not a jot: his interest in politics and literature and persons, the work of his contemporaries and the promise of his juniors, remained as keen as ever. When one succeeded in drawing a monologue it would sometimes be almost as brilliant and well-sustained as those of earlier days. For two years I had for one reason or another failed to see him, when one day in the mid-spring of 1909 came the news of his serious illness, and almost immediately afterwards of his death. It was on a radiant May day, a day of summer rather than spring, that a little company of us, his friends, assembled by his cottage gate and followed his remains to the grave chosen for them in Dorking churchyard. That at least is the material account and external semblance of what happened. What truly, to the inward and spiritual sense, happened on that day has been told by the most devoted of his younger friends, Sir James Barrie, in words as moving as were ever written by one man of letters about another. When the coaches were gone, the cottage, to the unsealed vision, was according to Barrie not deserted. There still sat in his chair, as of yore, an old man, but presently his old age fell away from him ("for this is what is meant by Death to such as he"). He rose and

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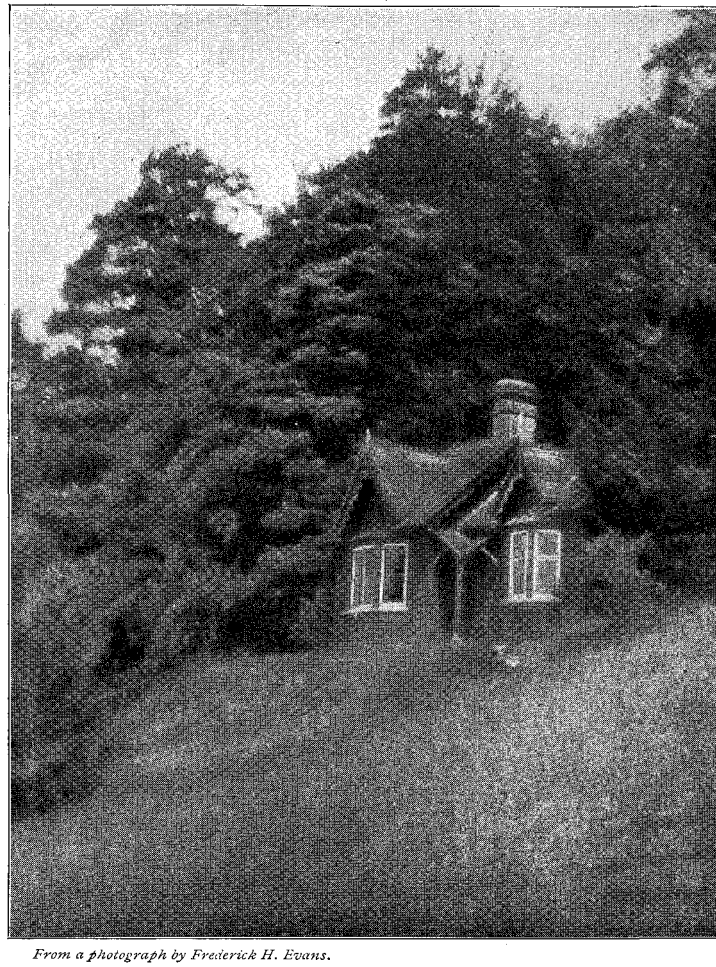
went through the door into the garden, where he found all the men and women of his creation drawn up to salute and do him reverence: thence up the garden walks to the chalet,—

" where he worked, and good and brave men will for ever bow proudly before it,

knew they were once again to breast the hill with him.

" He strode up the hill whirling his staff, for which he had no longer any other use. His hearing was again so acute that from far away on the Dorking road he could hear the rumbling of a coach. It had been disputed whether he should be



From a photograph by Frederick H. Evans.

The Chalet, Box Hill.

The two-roomed chalet which he [Meredith] built in an upper corner of his garden.—Page 202.

but good and brave women will bow more proudly still. He went there only because he had gone so often, and this time the door was locked; he did not know why nor care. He came swinging down the path, singing lustily, and calling to his dogs, his dogs of the present and the past; and they yelped with joy, for they

buried in Westminster Abbey or in a quiet churchyard, and there came to him somehow a knowledge (it was the last he ever knew of little things) that people had been at variance as to whether a casket of dust should be laid away in one hole or in another, and he flung back his head with the old glorious action, and laughed a

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laugh 'broad as a thousand beeves at pasture.'

"Box Hill was no longer deserted. When a great man dies—and this was one of the greatest since Shakespeare—the immortals await him at the top of the nearest hill. He looked up and saw his peers. They were all young, like himself. He waved the staff in greeting. One, a mere stripling, 'slight unspeakably,' R. L. S., detached himself from the others, crying gloriously, 'Here's the fellow I have been telling you about!' and ran down the hill to be the first to take his Master's hand. In the meanwhile an empty coach was rolling on to Dorking."

Those beloved women and maidens of Meredith's creation are not, as some readers will doubtless have remembered already, the only heroines of fiction whom we have to imagine haunting the slopes of Box Hill. An earlier novelist, in her limited field the subtlest artist who ever wrought at that craft in England—I mean of course Jane Austen—has made a certain afternoon picnic on the site for ever memorable by the misbehavior of the dear, the fascinating and fastidious, the too confident and too managing Emma Woodhouse, whose cleverness led her into more blunders than a duller person could ever have committed, and who on the day of that picnic made poor Jane Fairfax so dreadfully unhappy by her reckless flirtation with Frank Churchill. Nor are there wanting other associations with the place, not brain-wrought and phantasmal like these, but concerned with beings all too human and red-blooded: for was it not here that Nelson and Lady Hamilton met and parted for the last time? But in truth the whole neighborhood teems with associations literary and human. Look across the valley to the great park of Norbury or the more modest grounds of Camilla Lacey; and the charming Fanny Burney, with her novels and her diaries and her friends, her marriage and married life with the most irreproachably correct of French noblemen in exile, will rise up to occupy and animate the scene. And now Norbury itself is in the market, just as Box Hill was lately before the transaction to which I have referred. Would that it were possible for some benefactor to make those noble park lands, and with them practically the whole valley, public property also.

AT PARTING

By Abbie Carter Goodloe

Now must we go our separate ways, Beloved.
I may not follow you 'mid shot and shell—
Whatever to this hate-racked world War means,
To women it must ever mean, "Farewell!"

Unmurmuring must we send you forth to death,
The love-locked gates of life fling open wide,
Bid you troop out—you dear ones whom we've kept
So close and warm!—and see you go, dry-eyed.

From out seared, silent hearts must thrust you forth
With no caress, no word, lest courage fail—
Crumble beneath the dear, familiar touch,
And love, with traitor-tenderness, prevail.

Oh, God of Battles! is there yet some land,
Some happy land, where partings have surcease?
Where unwrung heart leans to another heart,
And breathes in tranquil rapture, "Here is peace!"?

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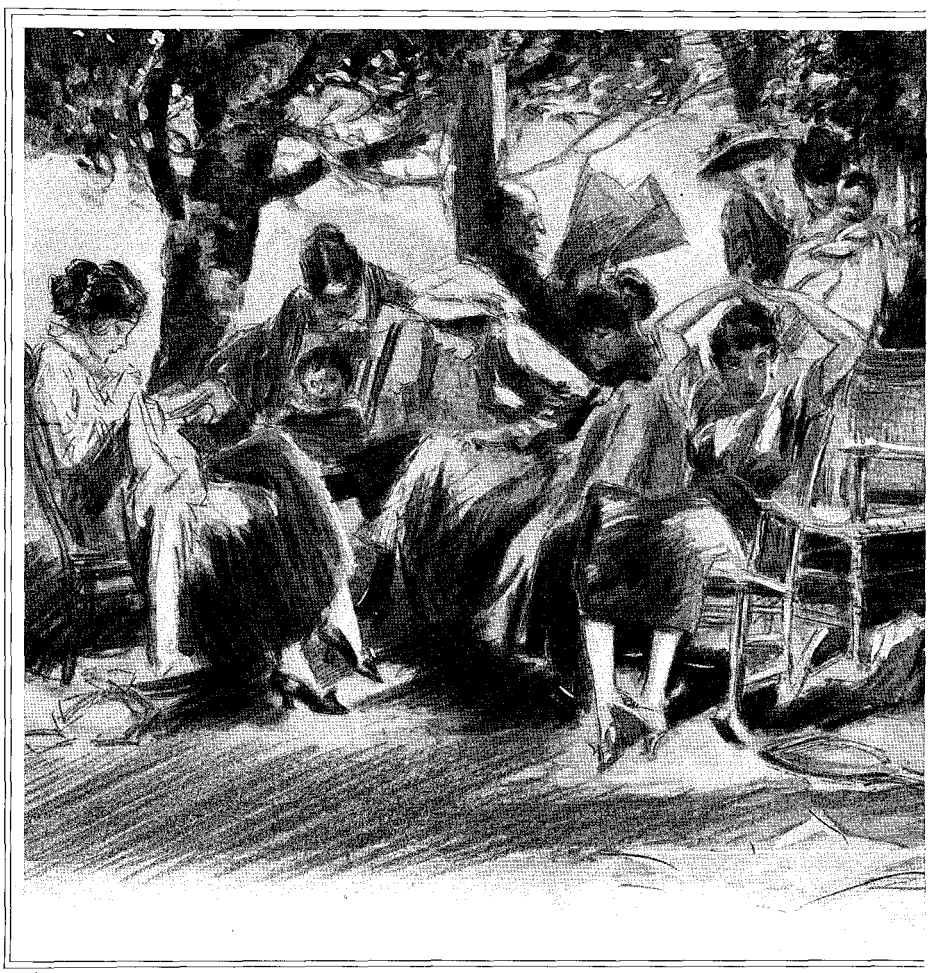

Daggett felt that there was interesting work ahead . . . work

THE COLYUM CONDUCTOR

By Arthur Chapman

ILLUSTRATIONS BY EVERETT SHINN

DAGGETT ran a column of verse and paragraphs on a New York newspaper. It was an interesting column—"clever" was the word that fell oftenest on the ears of the bored Daggett—and thousands turned to it before they so much as glanced at the portentous headings on the front page. Daggett drew a big salary, but he was worth it and more. Many of his quips crept, or rather jumped, into the common speech of the day. Comedians and monologists made free use of the material in the "On the Face of Things" column. Daggett's work was steadily clipped by watchful exchange editors everywhere, and the changes on his jests were rung by other column conductors, but before a "wheeze" had per-

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that would keep him busy without mental effort.—Page 213.

colated to Biloxi or Yakima the resourceful humorist had caught the public fancy with something new.

No one with a head for figures had ever estimated how much of a void would have been created if all the laughs for which Daggett was responsible had been removed from the world, but such a void would have been considerable. Still, Daggett never posed as a benefactor of the human race. He was content to put his modest initials, A. S. D., at the bottom of his column each day, nor longed for a widening and deepening of the path the world was wearing to the door of his flat. He freely admitted that he was giving his newspaper work the best that was in him, and never hinted that he was saving his major efforts for a book or play. No doubt it was largely because of this honesty of effort that Daggett's following increased and his salary went up until it became the envy of every other column conductor in the country.

In fact, so interested was Daggett in his work that he always had to be told when it was time for him to take a vacation. For the second time in one season Daggett's chief had reminded him that he had some recreation coming. Daggett was puzzled for a while. He did not care for fishing, or he would have struck for the trout country, and the thought of firing a gun at a live animal filled him with hor-

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ror. The crowds at the beaches did not provide the same proportion of "hunches" that came from city crowds. For Daggett was always on the lookout for possible copy. A sign in the subway, or some linguistic peculiarity of a guard, or a headline shrilled in distorted fashion by a newsboy—all these were trifles which did not seem as trifles when transferred to Daggett's column.

Daggett had always found that it was slower work getting ideas in proportion to the thinning of the mob. The man who built that greatest of crowd-catchers, the subway, laid no small part of Daggett's modest fortune. The business of wresting material from the brooks and the skies and the hills and the sea appealed to Daggett not at all. Other column conductors could do it. There was Weddige, out in Saint Louis, who had published two or three creditable volumes of near-to-nature verse which had first appeared in his column. Burton, down in Dallas, had made his big hit with "kid" verse—something which Daggett never attempted. In short, Daggett was content to be the rhymester and jester of the villagers of New York, who like pure frivol liberally sprinkled with names of the prominent.

"You've hit 'em right," said Daggett's chief. "Keep poking fun in a well-bred, satirical way. It's the safest play to hit class foibles. Nobody gets sore at such jabs. It's always one's neighbor who is getting hurt, you know. The individual who happens to do the reading is always above class foibles—in his own estimation."

But Daggett, having been born with the newspaper man's greatest asset, good judgment, hardly needed such advice, and the chief knew it. However, he made his lecture on vacation-seeking rather more effective.

"Now, look here, Daggett," pursued the chief, "what are you going to do about this vacation business? You really must take one for the sake of the paper's reputation. If you keep on working they'll say we are paying you such a big salary that we can't afford to let you have any time off. You must stay away the full two weeks. Make it a month if you want to. No slicing it down to ten days, much as you want to get back to work. I'll not try to advise you where to go. No doubt you have a place all spotted."

"Well, I haven't," growled Daggett, "but if you'll tie this handkerchief around my eyes I'll have a place in a minute."

The editor wonderingly tied the handkerchief, while Daggett picked a pin from a tray on his desk. Then Daggett walked straight at a map of New England which hung on the wall and jabbed the pin into its geographic vitals. Slipping off the handkerchief, he looked at the pin, whose head gleamed close to an obscure town near one of those caterpillars which represent mountain ranges on all well-regulated maps.

"That's where I'm going," said Daggett. "Right to that little joint, Rockton. Sounds common enough, doesn't it? Well, I'm going there and bury myself. I'm coming back to New York as shy of original ideas as a Sunday editor. You give me an order on the cashier for that two weeks' pay, and it's the last diplomatic relations we'll have till the school bell rings again."

"Fine!" ejaculated the chief.

And that was how Daggett, the admired conductor of the world's most quoted "colyum," began the one big adventure of his life.

Daggett was somewhat disappointed, on reaching Rockton, to find that the only vehicle for summer tourist use was an automobile instead of a ramshackle carriage. The chauffeur, too, was evidently a city importation, and not the bearded, gossipy village sort Daggett had pictured. The inn, it transpired, was a mile and a half up the hillside. The hill itself was the start of the mountain that had loomed so large on the map which Daggett had stabbed. In reality it wasn't such a big mountain as the map-maker had tried to fool the public into believing. Daggett had seen the Rockies, and he could institute comparisons. But its smallness only made him glad. He was getting away from the largest city on the western hemisphere, with its talk of the largest bank accounts and its constant evidence of the largest capacity for feverish amusements. He wanted small things, and a small mountain looked like a good start.

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Left to his choice of walking or adding another automobile ride to the rides of which he had sickened, Daggett ingloriously chose the automobile. The road looked dusty, and his walking-shoes were in his suit-case, anyway. So, quite certain that he was not going to realize any of his vacation expectations, Daggett leaned back against the cushions and smoked. The town-drafted chauffeur tried to engage him in conversation, but, when it came to shutting off talkative drivers, Daggett had a way with him. More Daggetts in cars and the ratio of automobile accidents would be considerably lessened.

At the first glimpse of the inn Daggett was cheered. It was painted blue, and he knew, even before he saw the sign in front, that it was called the Blue-Jay Inn. Probably there are a thousand Blue-Jay Inns in New England, all painted blue. Some day a Bernard Shaw among innkeepers is going to prove that, by all the rules of real logic, Blue-Jay Inns should be painted red. Daggett would have fled before such evidence of originality. A Blue-Jay Inn was just what he wanted. He descended from the car and strode up the blue steps, almost whistling.

Several women were rocking on the front porch. Most of them were about the age of the woman with the serpent's tongue—doubtful, to put it non-Watsonically. As Daggett climbed the steps he noticed that a board under the nearest rocker gave out a high note. A board a little farther down the porch was pitched lower. Daggett felt that there was interesting work ahead classifying the different tones in those porch boards. It was work that would keep him busy without mental effort.

A young woman interested Daggett almost at first glance. She was quite the youngest and best-looking of the half-dozen on the porch. She was just over a board which squeaked in A-flat, and she ceased not her contributions to the mass of porch harmony. The other sounds stopped momentarily when Daggett had mounted the steps, but the A-flat board kept on squeaking. Daggett resolved to thank the A-flat rocker at the first opportunity for the reassuring lack of interest thus displayed.

The interest of the majority of porch rockers at the Blue-Jay Inn was short-lived, so far as the new arrival was concerned. In fact, no man who lacks the physical endowment of a movie hero can create a real flutter at a summer resort. The comic-weekly theory that men are all that make summer-resort life worth living is a man-made fabrication intended to flatter that portion of the sex which does most of its reading in barber shops. Daggett never would create a sensation anywhere, if he depended on personal appearance. Not that he was bad-looking. He had no distinguishing features. His hair might have been fetching if he had allowed it to grow long enough to show its natural waviness. His brow was broad enough to be pleasing, but he kept his hat pulled down over his eyes. Tortoise-shell glasses might have supplied the missing note of distinction, but the spectacles Daggett wore were of the grandfather variety, with steel bows. He was neither short nor tall, and, in fact, was one of those original personalities which take a long time to impress people with their distinctive qualities. Daggett found this an advantage, for it enabled him to study people in their natural moods. When Smithers, the corner druggist, found that his ordinary-looking customer was a distinguished humorist, there was an end of copy for Daggett. Smithers immediately became possessed of the desire to say brilliant things. He was no longer Smithers the unconsciously funny druggist, but a very poor actor, always trying to show off with puns and antiquated jests in the presence of Daggett.

Away from New York, Daggett had reasonably based hopes that his identity would remain a secret for two weeks at least. Journalism, even in its greatest aspects, is a provincial thing. The influence of the mightiest newspaper outside its own bailiwick is feeble and gasping. The brilliant work of the best reporter in New York never penetrates to Mancos, Colorado. Yet the aggregate of people in the nation's Mancoses is far greater than New York's five millions. Newspaper fame Daggett would have put beside a statesman's classification of the tariff as a local issue. Consequently, he put his full name on the register and knew no fear.

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The host of the Blue-Jay Inn was formerly a livery-stable keeper who had sold out the business and bought the hotel after years of heckling by his wife. In the depths of his heart there always lurked a longing to return to the livery business. Daggett was glad to find the conversation of his host turning to horses. He had once spent a week at a winter resort in Florida where the proprietor had retailed the isms and ologies that had been brought to his place by guests from all over the country. But the Blue-Jay host was not of that sort. Encouraged by Daggett's ordinary appearance and subdued manner, he had invited the paragrapher to come out and view a promising two-year-old colt. Then he had turned Daggett over to the Blue-Jay hostess, who had introduced the humorist to the other guests as Mr. Baggot, and had given him the one magazine he detested above all others and left him to his fate.

It was not many minutes before Daggett found himself talking to the young woman who had caught his attention on the hotel porch. He had not talked with her long before he struck a copy trail. She was the most delightfully prosaic conversationalist he had ever met. Her first half-dozen sentences were platitudes. Though each was a naked fish-hook, Daggett went after it voraciously. He had been bombarded so long with all the flashy things stored up in the minds of his brilliant acquaintances, that here was something refreshing. At the sixth platitude Daggett leaned back in his chair and experienced a languorous delight that he had not known for years. He had no idea that conversation could be made so soothing.

The young woman's name was Almira —Almira Myers. It was a name lyric in itself, and Daggett almost hummed it like a lullaby. Beyond this she said nothing of herself, and Daggett did not ask. It was enough to bask in the sunshine of her bromidioms. He was sorry when the waitress came out and whanged the huge triangle that called the boarders to dinner. There were no laggards. The inviting walks that stretched from the Blue-Jay Inn were seldom trod by boarders' feet. It was so much easier to sit on the porch and take one's exercise rocking. Had the vibrant triangle been a child's toy, all could have heard it. Almira's only comment on the ringing of the triangle was that she believed in having one's meals regularly. It didn't make so much difference what one ate, she thought, as having each meal served at the right hour.

"Great!" thought Daggett. "If she'd been right out of a college for young women probably she would have made some brilliant remark about the base uses of this mighty crowbar, fit for the hand of Archimedes himself."

After dinner Daggett's paragraphic instincts began to assert themselves. He rummaged around in his suit-case till he found copy paper. He did not remember putting any copy paper there. In fact, he had intended to make this a noteless trip. But, anyway, the copy paper was there, and a good thing it was, too, for he had made a find which was bound to tickle the appetites of his New York readers.

Daggett wrote down several of Almira's remarks. He could not remember all her platitudes, but no doubt she had plenty more in reserve. He would make them a feature of his column during the next two weeks. Better than that, he would make them the only feature. Regardless of his announced intention of not writing a line during his absence, Daggett sent on a half-dozen of Almira's platitudes. He despatched a short note to his chief, explaining that he intended to run a series, entitled "The Bromidioms of Daphne." Nothing else was to appear in the column. Electric under the glow of his inspiration, Daggett sealed and stamped the letter and tucked it in his pocket. Then he set out to walk to the village post-office. He was disappointed not to find Almira on the porch as he went out. He would have liked the walk with her to the post-office. Perhaps on the way she would have contributed another day's supply of bromidioms to his column.

Almira appeared in the evening, but spoke to him only briefly and vanished. Next morning, however, she was on the porch, and, in a quiet angle, Daggett listened once more to her soothingly commonplace remarks. He was careful not to say anything that would break the thread of her conversation. He refrained from mentioning books, plays, or music.

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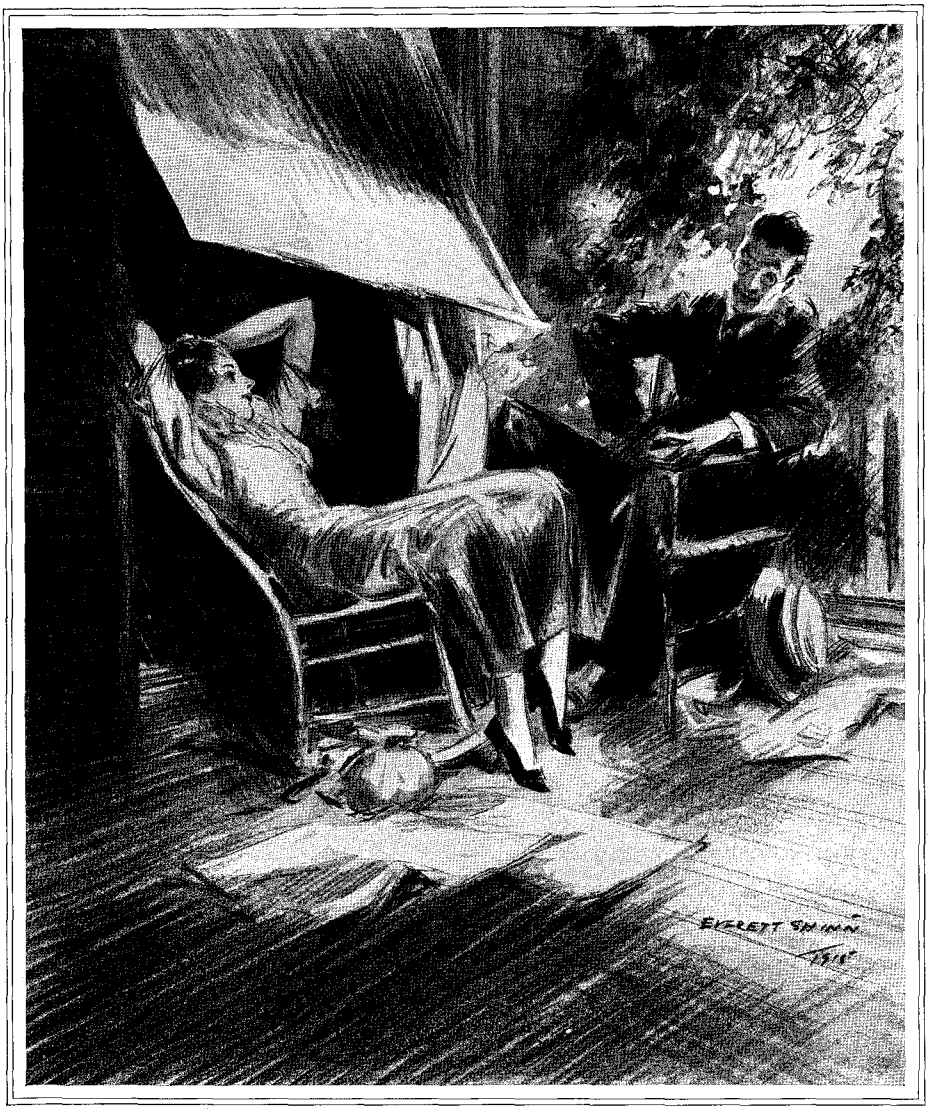

He had not talked with her long before he struck a copy trail.—Page 214.

A Debussy selection on the phonograph brought no remark from him. He coincided with Almira when she said the new music might be all right, but the old songs, like old friends, wore best.

It was a morning swiftly sped, so far as Daggett was concerned. He was afraid he had missed at least half of Almira's platitudes, they came so fast. But the half he set down pleased him immensely. He captioned them and forwarded the lot to be put in the column. He felt a trifle guilty when Almira walked to the post-office with him and watched him post the letter containing her innocent vacuities.

"But," reflected Daggett, "we are going to part after this two weeks' vacation of mine is up, and I'm never going to see her again. She will not know who I am, and it is reasonably certain she is never going to see these things in print. Consequently it is perfectly legitimate for me to make use of her remarks for copy."

So Daggett dropped the letter in the

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post-office and eased his conscience by buying Almira an ice-cream soda, for which she in turn rewarded him by remarking that while ice-cream was good, and soda-water was good, yet it was noticeable that each tasted better in an ice-cream-soda glass.

Next day Daggett received a telegram from his chief congratulating him on the hit the Daphne stuff was making.

"You haven't had such another wheeze in the colyum since you began the work," went on the telegram. "The contributors are flooding the mail with variations of the Daphne bromides. Fire along an instalment every day, by wire if necessary. Where the dickens are you getting it?"

Daggett gave one of his justly celebrated sardonic grins. Tell where he was getting it, indeed! Was any successful prospector in the habit of babbling of the location of his richest gold claim? Nobody should ever be told about this Almira of the Bromides, who had drifted so strangely into his life, with her craft a blue rocker on the blue porch of the Blue-Jay Inn, and who was to drift so completely out again in a scant two weeks. He thrust the telegram into his pocket, and Almira noted the color of the envelope. Her gentle eyes widened, and she remarked that she always hated to get telegrams, they startled her so. She never yet had had one announcing a calamity in her family, but one never knows when it is to be one's turn. Daggett found it considerable of a game to match such stereotyped remarks with replies equally stereo. His average of successful returns was not high. One of his feeble efforts along the line of the trite was generally capped by two or three from Almira, and Daggett was left stranded.

Almira did not seem to mind any lapses in the conversation. In fact, when Daggett figured it up at the end of the day, Almira herself did not do so very much talking. He saw her perhaps an hour in the morning and two hours more, afternoon and evening, and the sum total of their conversation would not fill the smallest phonograph record. Out of this he secured from fifteen to twenty-five lines of "The Bromidioms of Daphne" and fired them on to the paper.

Once a great fear swept over Daggett. He thought of the smashing of everything if his newspaper should happen to be among those taken at the Blue-Jay Inn. He went to the library and pawed over all the periodicals on the table. His journal was not there. His host assured Daggett that the most-quoted newspaper in the world was not received in the village and never had been received in the village. In fact, the host had never heard of it, even as a distant and shadowy affair. He preferred to read nothing in the periodical line but a horse journal. He renewed the invitation to come out and see the two-year-old colt. Daggett went, but yawned while the host was explaining the animal's supernatural gifts of speed, and there were no more invitations. The insulted host confided to his wife that, if the young feller from New York was a sample, the standard of intelligence in that town was anything but high.

Daggett found himself looking forward to the hours of sitting and walking with Almira. He was pleased in greater degree each time Almira appeared. Sometimes it was Daggett who sat by Almira, and sometimes Almira dropped into the empty chair that was always beside Daggett, but their companionship was so simple and childlike that not half an eyebrow was raised among the elderly ladies who constituted the main battery of porch rockers.

Toward the end of the first week, Daggett got another telegram from his chief. It read:

"Daphne has the town's goat. All wild about her platitudes. You aren't thinking up that stuff, surely. Where are you getting it? By all means keep it up!"

Again Daggett smiled, and glanced at the cool, placid, and comforting young creature at his side. Almira had just given him a mine of commonplaces that day, beginning with a statement as to the unmanageability of her hair after it had been washed, which remark was inspired by the dropping of a hairpin under her rocker. Daggett had picked up the hairpin and had noticed that Almira's hair was exceptionally glossy and wavy, and the hands which patted her locks into place were white and small and quick. They were the hands of an individual

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of active temperament, and, beautiful though they were, somehow did not fit Almira's placid personality. They flitted about her hair momentarily, white as snowflakes, and then they were folded in her lap and were still. Daggett, soothed with another platitude, again dreamed.

Toward the middle of the second week, Daggett began to feel uneasy. He wondered how he was going to say good-by to Almira. She settled the question herself by coming down one morning with her suit-case in her hand and announcing her departure. Yes, it was sudden, but her sister's second baby was sick, and help was needed at home. She shook hands with everybody, and several of the porch rockers and the landlady patted her shoulder and kissed her. The landlord also was genuinely sorry to have Almira go, not because she represented the loss of a paying boarder, but because she had not yawned when he showed her the two-year-old colt, and also because she talked talk that he could understand.

As for Daggett, he found no word to say until Almira had faced him shyly to say good-by. Then he remembered that this was just the moment for a commonplace ending of a commonplace acquaintance—not so commonplace for him, perhaps, because it had supplied him with good copy, but easily forgotten so far as its actualities as a friendship were concerned. He shook Almira's hand, though not effusively, and deliberately let the landlord have the honor of carrying her suit-case to the automobile. Almira fired her final platitude to the effect that she had found Mr. Daggett's acquaintance at once pleasing and helpful, and she hoped he would get over the habit of receiving so many telegrams, as it surely would bring on heart trouble. Then she was carried away in the auto, and Daggett went to his room and wrote the last bunch of bromides under the Daphne heading and wandered alone to the post-office.

Daggett had intended to stay three days longer, but, without giving himself any satisfactory explanation for his act, he departed the next morning. The last sound he heard from the porch was the squeaking of chair rockers, but the note in A-flat was missing. Turning, as the automobile rounded the curve near the house, Daggett could have sworn that he saw Almira in her chair on the porch and that her hands were fluttering at her hair like snowflakes. But he knew it was only imagination, and that in all probability he was never to see Almira again. Thinking over this finality, which of a sudden had become astonishingly grim, Daggett was in such a state of dejection by the time he reached the office that his chief said:

"That's a helva expression for a rejuvenated vacationer! And what the deuce do you mean, young feller, by cutting short that Daphne bromide stuff in the colyum when you had it going good? I telegraphed you to-day that Dilson wants to stage Daphne, and Haskin, the publisher, wants a novel written around her. You've got your chance at the big stuff at last, my boy. Now go to it!"

Daggett "went to it," but only half-heartedly. It was hard work for him to get through his column a day, much less to tackle a novel and a comedy. The sixth chapter of the novel found him ready to quit, and the scenario of the play was tossed aside, the clamorous Dilson being gruffly told to wait. Daggett knew what was the matter. He missed Almira. If he could have fallen under her soothing influence an hour or two a day he knew he could have turned out copy which would have satisfied his own critical taste. He missed the quiet of her voice and the calm of her eyes, and one of her innocent little bromides would have been balm to his soul. Daggett fell into a state of snarling savagery which was not understood by the copy boy, or the men in the composing-room, or the others about the office who were in the habit of coming in with possible contributions. Daggett deliberately alienated several of his most dependable contributors, who "switched" to a rival column. But he did not want contributors. He wanted Almira.

Daggett wrote at last to the landlord of the Blue-Jay Inn, asking for the address of Miss Almira Myers, a young lady who had stopped there a few weeks before. But the landlord was a creature of mean revenges, and he remembered that Daggett had yawned over the two-year-old colt. So he tore Daggett's letter into bits and it went unanswered. Daggett waited a few

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days for a reply, and then he telegraphed to the landlady, asking why in blazes a guest of that hotel could not get information when he wrote for it, and would his communication regarding the address of Miss Almira Myers please receive some attention? The landlord confessed his guilt to his wife and received a merited rebuke, but the landlady respectfully and regretfully informed Mr. Daggett—and she hoped to have the honor of seeing him again next season—that Miss Myers had gone without leaving any address.

Convinced that he must face the future Almiraless and without hope of ever having the raw edges of life smoothed under her gracious touch, Daggett gave up the search for his one divinity and deliberately planned to hasten his inevitable chronic cynicism by going in for social doings. These were things which Daggett had avoided with scrupulous care. His invitations were many. Some of his "contribs" were wealthy social leaders, but Daggett always gave himself credit for printing their good stuff just as readily as he printed the stuff of the socialist printers up-stairs. He saw no reason for turning down Art just because it was brought in by wearers of purple-edged robes. Social invitations, however, he had refused systematically, and now, with Almira hopelessly lost, life had been turned inside out, so far as he was concerned. He meant to do all the things he believed in not doing, and one of his steps was to accept several bids which lay on his desk.

At one of these affairs, a lecture whose subject he did not remember, Daggett was a little late. The young woman who had invited him was one of his "highbrow" contributors. She sent in splendid translations of Slav poets whose names nobody knew and that caused Mergenthaler men and proof-readers an immense amount of worry. She had never inveigled the overseer of the column to one of her highly instructive affairs, but she had not ceased to send him invitations, and at last he had done her the almost incredible honor of accepting. Then, at the beginning of her hour of triumph, there had been a miserable delay on the street-car, and they were late getting to their seats in the darkened hall.

Somebody was lecturing, and the voice went flowing on, calm and quiet, and Daggett was conscious of giving a foolish start when he heard it—one of those starts which novelists are always describing and which Daggett scornfully declared in print to be among the things people never did in real life. Yet he started so violently that he dropped his hat with a clatter. Before he stooped to recover it he straightened up deliberately, in spite of an exclamation of annoyance from a spectacled young sociologist behind him, and took a long look at the speaker on the platform.

There could be no doubt about it—the speaker was Almira. She was dressed in white, almost as she used to dress at the Blue-Jay Inn. Her brow was as serene as ever, and her gaze as clear, and her voice as firm and comforting. Only instead of platitudes she was talking something very deep. From the lips which had framed "The Bromidioms of Daphne" came sentences crisp and with the right words always dropped into the right places.

Had Daggett remained standing another fraction of a second, drinking in all these wonders, he would have received a sharp punch in the back from the indignant young sociologist behind him. Then there would have been a slight disturbance, and perhaps Almira would have recognized him, but Daggett sank dazedly into his seat and managed to comport himself reasonably well for a man whose brain was for the moment all sky-rockets and pinwheels.

By all the rules of romance Almira should have seen Daggett come in, or, better still, by some sixth sense she should have divined his presence in the hall. But rules of romance suffer the most unlooked-for suspensions in New York, and Almira went on talking to the not overly vast assemblage as impersonally as when it was Andrew Scott Daggettless.

The young woman at Daggett's side heard every word normally, no doubt, but Daggett heard only the beloved voice of the girl on the porch of the Blue-Jay Inn, and he would close his eyes, even as he used to do in the rocking-chair when the bromides were rippling, but he must keep them very intently on that figure on the platform lest said figure vanish as when a film breaks at a moving-picture performance. Daggett did not remember the

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subject of the lecture. It was something deep and puzzling, but, as set forth in Almira's clear language, it did not mystify the audience. In fact, when the lecture was over and the applause had subsided, at least half the audience lingered to meet the speaker, thinking, perhaps, to get a few words on a topic that had been made so vital.

Daggett was among those who lingered. Dimly he heard his lecture companion explaining that this dear, brilliant girl who had just thrilled everybody with that exquisite lecture was the most gifted student in our college, and she had just finished her education abroad and now she was going to devote her life to uplifting the submerged nine-tenths, not by working in the depths so much as by appealing to the floating one-tenth. She was going to prove that the social uplift would pay the race, morally, mentally, and financially. If anybody could succeed, through sheer force of a highly developed intellect, it was Isabelle Myers. Yes, her name might be Isabelle Almira Myers. Come to think of it, at college, Isabelle did sign an "A" between her first and last names.

The lion-hunters in the crowd filed back of the stage and into a little reception-room, where Almira, youthful and beautiful and smiling, shook hands and listened to words of praise, not as if they pleased her particularly, but as if they might be slight aids in the cause she had taken up. Daggett and his lecture companion joined the line. The young woman contributor wore a large hat, and its plumes concealed Daggett's features until he stood tremblingly in front of Almira, with his words of salutation choked somewhere in his throat and his outstretched hand shaking visibly. But, in spite of all his agitation, the real Daggett was watching, from those steel-bowed glasses, for whatever look might leap into the eyes of his Daphne of the Bromides when he faced her.

Daggett and his lecture companion joined the line.

The young woman contributor, who introduced Daggett as the celebrated A. S. D. of the *Star*, merely thought Almira was strangely and unaccountably flustered. But Daggett knew better. He had seen

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the light for which he had looked, and he knew Almira had been far from forgetting him. He managed to murmur something about having enjoyed the lecture, and then he passed on, propelled by the young sociologist who had sat behind him and who was eager to crush Almira's hand and tell her what a godsend she was to the human race. It was an exalted Daggett that walked out of Almira's presence. He laughed foolishly aloud as he piloted to the curb the young lady who translated Russian poets.

"I'm sorry, but I'll have to send you home alone," said Daggett thickly, as he thrust his lecture companion into the shallows of a half-grown taxicab. "It's something I've forgotten at the office—proof of a triolet which I overlooked reading. You have no idea of the things the machine operators can do to verse forms. Good-by! I've enjoyed this lecture immensely—more than you'll ever suspect, in fact."

The note of genuine sincerity in Daggett's last words was unmistakable and prevented any protests. As the taxicab disappeared, containing a puzzled young woman, Daggett turned back to the lecture-hall in search of another young woman who was also puzzled. He found Almira in the centre of a cordon of her most faithful feminine admirers. Daggett's charge upon this cordon was notable. The exploit of Fuzzy-Wuzzy in breaking a British square was not to be mentioned, poetically or any other way, in comparison with the masterly manner in which Daggett scattered the group about his Almira.

He had half-expected to find that she had disappeared during his brief absence, but no—here was one of her snowflake hands resting on his rough coat sleeve as they made their way to the street together. Hereafter he would have his coats made of better and softer material, lest those hands be scratched!

There was another reckless demand upon the endless taxicab resources of New York. Daggett had swiftly planned that, when he had seated himself beside Almira in the vehicle, he would confess his duplicity and declare his love at the same time. But the taxi was slow in arriving, and Daggett's courage had ebbed second by second. Almira, too, was ill at ease owing to the deception she had practised on this sophisticated city person at the Blue-Jay Inn, when she had apparently convinced him that bromidioms formed her natural means of expression. Altogether it was a rather formal ride to Almira's home, whereas Daggett, at the peak load of his enthusiasm, had fully determined that the journey should be marked by a proposal of marriage as fervid and gallant as anything that ever figured in those impossible romances where love-affairs are carried along at whirlwind speed.

Only once in the course of the ride did Daggett have a surge of courage that might have enabled him to speak what was on his mind. That was when Almira, looking out of the taxicab window, said, in the drawling voice of the girl on the porch of the Blue-Jay Inn:

"Isn't the growth of the automobile business astonishing? They say every farmer in Kansas has his Ford."

Daggett was about to speak burning words, but just then the automobile stopped, and a few moments later he was going through the ceremony of meeting Almira's father, mother, and swarm of brothers and sisters.

The contributors virtually ran Daggett's column for the next few days. Faithful writers who had formed what they called the Wastebasket Hitters' Union were delighted at seeing their contributions in print. One enthusiastic coffee-merchant, who had tried unceasingly but unavailingly for three years to get so much as a line into the column, was so delighted at having a jest printed that he sent Daggett a twenty-five-pound sack of the finest Mandheling, which the department boss promptly *cached* for possible future domestic use.

The final chapter of the Daphne book went unwritten, and the rehearsals of the Daphne play went on without the customary quarrels between author and stage-director, for the reason that there was no author present to start any unpleasantness. But, for all his constant attendance upon Almira, a great embarrassment possessed Daggett. Each time he called he thought he would tell her everything, but there came the terrible thought that a confession of his duplicity might end their acquaintance. He pictured the confes-

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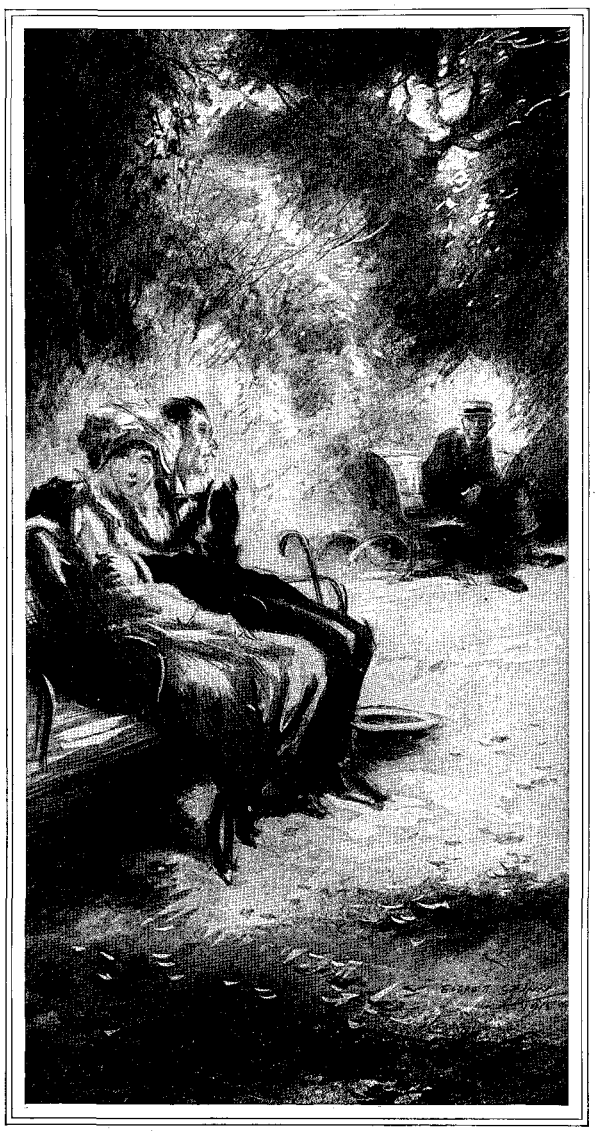
sion scene in a dozen different ways. But always she would look at him in pained surprise, and Daggett knew he never could stand it if he brought grief into the blue depths of the most adorable eyes in the world. Daggett had always claimed, in his column, that people in real life who are under severe mental stress never act as they do in books, yet he would pace up and down his office and mop his perspiring brow in approved fictional fashion every time he thought of losing Almira after having found her again. He was fearful lest, in some way, she should secure back numbers of the column, and the thought of her reading the heartless "Bromidioms of Daphne" and looking up at him with a stricken-doe expression made him groan aloud, just as he had claimed lovers in real life never groaned.



The deed of daring was done.—Page 223.

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He was angry with himself for having run the Daphne series, anyway. It was nothing but despicable clowning, the whole column-conducting business. He was going to hand in his resignation and ask some city editor for a job doing police or reading copy. With this determination in his mind he would put on his hat and rush to his chief's office—and then he would walk right on past the door, and go out and see Almira, and sit around gloomily in her home or walk moodily beside her and let his heels scuff in a way that advertised his dejection to the world.

"See how the leaves are falling. Ain't nature wonderful?"—Page 223.

As for Almira, she, too, had her doubts and fears. What they were Daggett did not know until one magic day when they had wandered into a little flat-iron park, just as the lamps were springing to life, and he had suddenly burst out with his

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declaration of love and had imprisoned an unresisting hand and covered it with kisses—all within sight and hearing of a fat man who evidently made it his business to declare himself "in" on park engagements. Then, while Daggett drew a deep breath, preparatory to confessing what base use he had made of her Blue-Jay Inn talks, Almira forestalled his confession by neatly putting hers across first.

"You see," said Almira, "I went to that little resort to get away from all the work I had been doing, just as you went away from your work. When you came up the steps at the Blue-Jay Inn I thought you looked so comfortably commonplace that I could practise bromidioms on you. You have no idea how systematically I worked, thinking up those little stereotyped remarks. They seemed to be what you had been used to hearing, so I kept on with them. They rested me, too, I found, so it became a pleasant sort of a game that I looked forward to every day. You'll forgive me for thinking you commonplace, won't you? I had no idea you were the brilliant A. S. D. of the *Star*."

"My only vanity is over my absence of vanity," solemnly reassured the surprised Daggett. "You haven't hurt my feelings a bit, but I'm not so sure that I haven't hurt yours."

Then Daggett told how he had used Almira's hard-studied commonplaces for copy, in the belief that they were the natural expressions of one who knew few by-paths of conversation.

Almira sat quiet a minute or two after Daggett had finished.

"It was mean of you," she said at last, "but under the circumstances I don't know that I blame you. Besides, it's some comfort to know that you suffered just a little bit when you had lost me. But you'll not make copy of me any more, after your book and play come out, will you?"

"Um—well, I can't promise that," said Daggett jauntily, as all his doubts and fears vanished. He looked about and figured that he would have at least a minute to put his arm about Almira's waist before the nearest arc-light sputtered its challenge to the darkness. The fat man was still near by, but he was kindly looking, and always pretended to be gazing into the tops of the park's three trees when Daggett glanced toward him. The deed of daring was done, and the arc-light held off at least fifteen seconds later than usual before its blaze made Daggett withdraw his arm.

"You see," said Daggett, with triumph, self-satisfaction, adoration, and a dozen other elements blended in his voice, "you can't expect me to turn down such good things as your bromidioms. I'll see that you are counted in on the royalties from them, though."

"Well," said Almira, with the demure expression of Daphne of the summer resort, "I suppose that will be all right if it's a partnership affair. Married people should have a common aim in life, don't you think?"

"And our aims will be bromides," laughed Daggett. "I'll come home, wearied to death after my hard two hours and thirteen minutes of toil, and we'll just talk common, ordinary things to each other and will live the only restful life in New York. And you've got to sit in a blue porch rocker, and I'll have the janitor loosen a board in the floor till it squeaks. Them's the only conditions on which I consent to marry you, miss."

More lights were bursting into white bloom, and the flat-iron was no longer a place for lovers. As they walked out of the little park together, hand in hand, Almira said:

"See how the leaves are falling. Ain't nature wonderful?"

And the fat man, who had heard the remark, wondered why so plain a statement of fact, which he had made himself every autumn for thirty years, should send both the young people into laughter.

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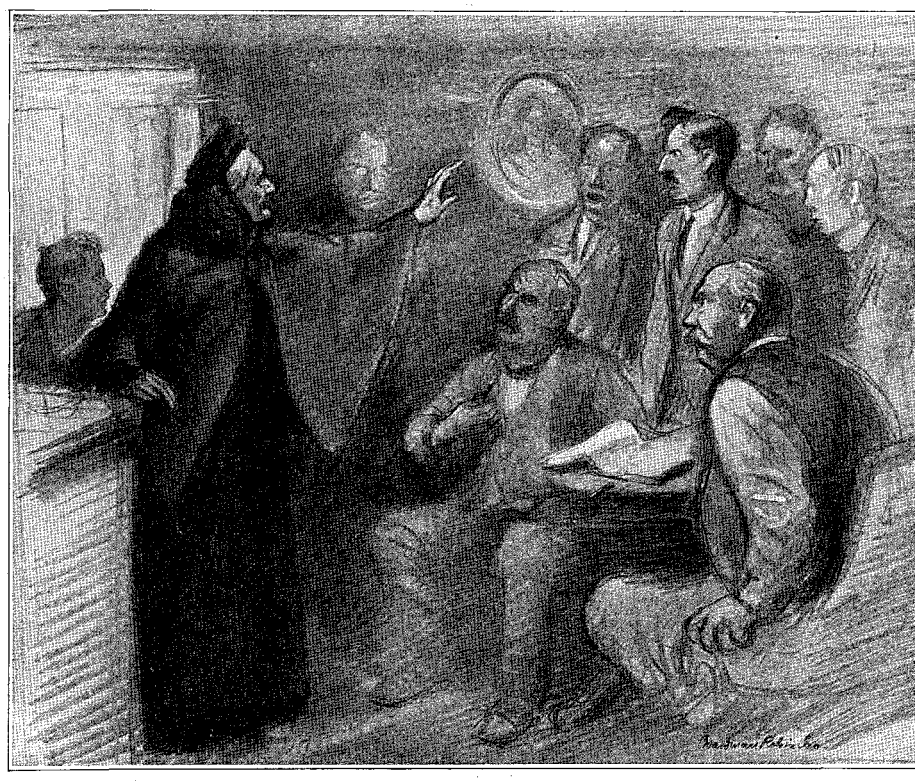

"Is it yourself, John Sutton, who's talking here of plots, and plans, and war?"—Page 229.

MY GRANDMOTHER AND MYSELF

By Mary Synon

ILLUSTRATIONS BY BOARDMAN ROBINSON

MY grandmother was at the basement window, peering into the street as if she were watching for some one, when I came home from school. "Is that you, John?" she asked me as I stood in the hall stamping the snow from my boots. "Sure," I called to her. "Who'd you think I was? A spirit?"

She laughed a little as I went into the room and flung down my books. My grandmother hasn't seen any one in ten years, though she sits day after day looking out on the street as if a parade were passing; but she knows the thump of my books on the table as well as she knows the turning of my father's key in the lock of the door. "'Tis a lively spirit you'd make, Shauneen," she said with that chuckle she saves for me. "No, 'twas your father I thought was coming."

"What'd he be doing home at this time?"

"These are queer days," she said, "and there are queer doings in them."

"There's nothing queer that I can see," I told her.

"I'm an old, blind woman," she said, "but sometimes I see more than do they who have the sight of their two eyes."

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She said it so solemnly, folding her hands one over the other as she drew herself up in her chair, that I felt a little thrill creeping up my spine. "What do you mean?" I asked her. "Time'll tell you," she said.

My mother came in from the kitchen then. "Norah forgot to order bacon for the morning," she said. "Will you go to the market, John, before you do anything else?"

"Oh, I'm going skating," I protested.

"It won't take you five minutes," said my mother. She seemed tired and worried. The look in her eyes made me feel that there was trouble hanging over the house. My mother isn't like my grandmother. When things go wrong, my grandmother stands up straight, and throws back her shoulders, and fronts ahead as if she were a general giving orders for attack; but my mother wilts like a hurt flower. She was drooping then while she stood in the room, so I said: "All right, I'll go," though I'd promised the fellows to come to the park before four o'clock.

"And look in at the shop as you go by," my grandmother said, "and see if your father's there now."

"Why shouldn't he be?" my mother asked.

There was a queer sound in her voice that urged me around past my father's shop. My father was there in the little office, going over blue-prints with Joe Krebs's uncle and Mattie Kleiner's father and a big man I'd never seen before. I told my grandmother when I went home. "I knew it," she said. "I knew it. And I dreamed last night of my cousin Michael who died trying to escape from Van Diemen's Land."

"You knew what?" I asked her, for again that strange way of hers sent shivery cold over me.

"Go to your skating," she bade me.

There wasn't much skating at Tompkins Square, though, when I found the crowd. The sun had come out strong in the afternoon and the ice was melting. "Ground-hog must have seen his shadow last week," Bennie Curtis said. All the fellows—Joe Carey and Jim Dean and Frank Belden and Joe Krebs and Mattie Kleiner and Fred Wendell and the rest of them—had taken off their skates and were starting a tug of war in the slush. Mattie Kleiner was the captain on one side and Frank Belden the captain on the other. Mattie had chosen Joe Krebs and Jim Dean and Joe Carey on his side. Just as I came along he shouted that he chose me. Frank Belden yelled that it was his choice and that he'd take me. "He don't want to be on your side!" Mattie cried. "He's with the Germans!"

"Well, I guess not," I said, "any more than I'm with the English. I'm an American."

"You can't be just an American in this battle," Frank Belden said.

"Then I'll stay out of it," I told him.

They all started to yell "Neutral!" and "'Fraid cat!" and "Oh, you dove of peace!" at me. I got tired of it after a while, and I went after Mattie hard. When I'd finished with him he bawled at me: "Wait till your father knows, he'll fix you!"

"What for?" I jeered.

"For going against his principles, that's what," Mattie Kleiner roared.

"I'd like to know what you know about my father's principles," I laughed at him.

"Well, I ought to know," he cried. "I heard him take the oath."

"What oath?" we all demanded, but Mattie went off in surly silence. Joe Krebs and Joe Carey trailed after him. I stayed with the other fellows until it was dark. Then I started for home.

Joe Carey was waiting for me at the corner. "Do you believe him, John?" he asked me. "Do you believe Mattie about the oath?"

"How's that?" I parried. I seemed to remember having heard a man who'd been at the house a fortnight before whispering something about an oath, and I knew that I'd heard my mother say to my grandmother: "I pray to God he'll get in no trouble with any oaths or promises." I kept wondering if Mattie Kleiner's father and Joe Krebs's uncle and the big man with the blue-prints who'd been in my father's shop had anything to do with it. "Oh, Mattie's talking in his sleep," I said.

"Well, maybe," said Joe Carey; "but

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he wasn't sleeping the night they had the meeting in his house. He was on the stairs going up to the top floor, and he kept the door open a little way and he heard everything they said, and nobody at all knew he was there."

Joe Carey's eyes were almost popping out of his head, and so I knew that Mattie had been telling him a long story. "I guess he didn't hear very much," I said.

"You bet he did," Joe declared. "He heard them reading the letters telling people not to go on the ships because they were going to be sunk, and he heard them talking about bombs and munition factories. He says that he heard your father say that he'd gladly lay down his life for the sake of Ireland."

"But Ireland's not in this war!"

"Sure it is! Mattie says the Germans are going to free Ireland if they beat England. That's why the Irish ought to be with the Germans. Mattie says your father'll be awful ashamed that you wouldn't go on his side. Mattie says your father——"

"I don't give a whoop what Mattie says about my father," I told him. "I guess I can take my own part."

"I guess you'll have to," said Joe.

As I went up the street toward our house I had that queer feeling that comes sometimes after I've been away for a while, a fear that something terrible has happened while I've been gone and that I'll be blamed for it. It was dark on the street, for people hadn't lighted the lamps in the basement dining-rooms, and I was hurrying along when suddenly a man's voice came over my shoulder. I hadn't heard his step behind me at all, and I jumped when he spoke. "Where does Mr. John Sutton live?" he asked me.

"Right there." I pointed to our house.

"Do you know him?" he asked. Through the dark I could see that he was a tall man with sharp eyes. I knew that I had never seen him before, and that he didn't look like any of the men who came to my father's machine-shop. "Don't you know Mr. Sutton?" he repeated.

"Yes, sir."

"Know him well, sonny?"

"Yes, sir."

"How well?"

"He's my father."

He whistled softly, then laughed, turned on his heel, and strode down the street. I watched him to see if he'd take the turn toward the shop, but he turned the other way at the corner. I thought that I'd tell my grandmother about him, but my mother was with her in the dark when I went in. They were talking very low, as if some one were dead in the house, but I heard my mother say, "If I only knew how far he's gone in this!" and my grandmother mutter: "Sure, the farther he goes in, the farther back he'll have to come." I stumbled over a chair as I went into the room with them, and they both stopped talking.

I could hear the little hissing whisper my grandmother always makes while she says the rosary, but I could hear no sound from my mother at all until she rose with a sigh and lighted the gas-lamp. She looked at me as if she hadn't known I'd been there. "Have you any home work to do to-night, John?" she asked me.

"No, ma'am," I said. "It's Friday."

"Then I want you to come to church with me after your dinner," she said.

"Oh, I don't want to go to church," I'd said before my grandmother spoke.

"'Twill be a queer thing to me as long as I live," she said, "that those who have don't want what they have and that those who haven't keep wanting."

The telephone bell rang just then up in the room that my father uses for an office, and I raced up to answer it. A man's voice, younger than that of the man who'd spoken to me, came over the wire. "Say, is this John Sutton's residence?" it asked. "And is he home? And, if he isn't, who are you?"

"What do you want?" I called.

"Information. This is *The World*. We hear that there's to be a meeting of the clans to-night, and we want to know where it's to be held."

"I don't know," I said.

"Can you find out?"

"No," I lied. "There's nobody home."

"Won't your father be home for dinner?"

Even then I could hear his key turning in the lock, could hear him passing on his way up to his bedroom, but a queer kind of caution was being born in me. "No, sir," I said.

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"Who was that?" my grandmother asked me when I went down.

I told her of the call, told her, too, of the man who had stopped me on the street. Her rosary slipped through her fingers. "I feared it," she said. Then the whisper of her praying began again.

At dinner my father was strangely silent. Usually he talks a great deal, all about politics, and the newspapers, and the trouble with the schools, and woman-suffrage, and war. But he said nothing at all except to ask me if the skating were good. My mother was just as quiet as he, and I would have been afraid to open my mouth if my grandmother hadn't started in to tell about New York in the days she'd come here, more than sixty-five years ago. She talked and talked about how different everything had been then, with no tall buildings and no big bridges and no subways and no elevateds. "Faith, you can be proud of your native town, John," she said to my father.

"I wish I'd been born in Ireland," he said.

She laughed. "And if I'd stayed in Ireland I'd have starved," she said, "and little chance you'd have had of being born anywhere."

"It might have been just as well," he said bitterly.

"Oh, no," she said; "there's Shauneen."

He rose from the table, flinging down his napkin. "I won't be home till very late," he said to my mother.

She stood up beside him. "Do you have to go, John?" she asked him.

"Yes," he said.

"Oh, John," she said, "I'm afraid."

"Of what?"

"Of what may happen you."

"Nothing'll happen me," he said.

I wanted to tell him of the strange man who had halted me on the street, and of the telephone call, but my father's anger was rising and I feared to fan it to flame. My grandmother said nothing until after my father had gone. Then she spoke to my mother.

"Don't you know better," she asked her, "and you eighteen years married to him, than to ask John not to do something you don't want him to do?"

My mother began to cry as we heard the banging of the outer door after my father. "Well, if you can do nothing else," my grandmother said, "you'd better be off to church. Keep your eyes open, Shauneen," she warned me while my mother was getting her hat and coat.

It was a grand night, with the evening star low in the sky, like a lamp, and the big yellow moon just rising in the east. The wind blew sharp and salt off the water, but there was a promise of spring in the air, saying that it must be almost baseball time. We went over to the Jesuit church, walking slowly all the way. There we knelt in the dark until I was stiff. As we came out my mother stopped at the holy-water font. "John," she said, "will you promise me that if you ever marry you'll never set any cause but God's above your wife?"

"No, ma'am, I won't," I said, vaguely understanding that my father had hurt my mother by his refusal to stay at home, and wondering what cause he had set above her. As we walked toward the car line I remembered what Joe Carey had told me of Mattie Kleiner's speech about my father. "Do you have to go to Ireland to die for Ireland?" I asked her. She clutched my hand. "My grandfather died for Ireland," she said, "and he wasn't the first of his line to die for her. But I pray God that he may have been the last." She said no more till we came into our own house.

My grandmother was still at the window of the dining-room. There was no light, and my mother did not make one. "There was another telephone call," my grandmother said. "Norah answered it. 'Twas the newspaper calling again for John to ask about the meeting. She said she knew nothing about it and that no one was here to answer."

"Do you suppose," I said, "it was detectives?"

They said nothing, and I could feel a big lump coming up my throat. I thought they might not have heard me until my grandmother said: "Do you know, Kate, where the meeting is?"

"I don't know, and I don't want to know," my mother cried. She turned to me sharply. "Go to bed, John," she said.

"I know where the meetings are," I

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blurted out, eager enough for any excuse to put off the hateful order. "They're at Mattie Kleiner's house, because he hides on the stairs when they come, and he heard them take the oath."

"Is that Matthew Kleiner's boy?" my grandmother asked, so quietly that I thought she had not realized the importance of my news.

"Yes, ma'am."

"Go to bed, Shauneen." She repeated my mother's order.

I went up-stairs, leaving the two of them silent in the dark. I whistled while I undressed, but I shivered after I had turned out the light and jumped between the sheets. I was going to lie awake waiting for my father's return, but I must have dozed, for I thought that it was in the middle of the night that something woke me. I knew, as soon as I woke, that some one was in my room. I could feel him groping. I tried to speak, but my tongue stuck to the roof of my mouth. Then I heard a faint whisper. "Shauneen," it said.

So far away it seemed that I thought it might be a ghost until my grandmother spoke again. "Your mother's in bed now," she said. "Put on your clothes as quick as you can."

"What is it?" I whispered.

"We're going to Matthew Kleiner's, you and I," she said. "I'd go alone if I could see."

"What time is it?"

"Between ten and eleven."

I pulled my clothes on as fast as I could. Then stealthily as thieves we crept out from my room and down the stairs. I held my grandmother's hand and wondered at its steadiness. When we had come outside the basement-door she halted me. "Look down the street for the tall man," she bade me. There was no one in sight, however, and we walked along sturdily, turning corners until we came to Kleiner's.

It was a red-brick house in a row, not a basement house like ours, but with a cellar below and an attic above its two main floors. There was no light on the first floor, but I thought that I saw a stream behind the drawn curtains up-stairs. I found the bell and pushed on it hard. No one came for a long time. I rang again. I could see shadows back of the shades before Mattie Kleiner's mother came. "What is it?" she demanded before she opened the door.

"Tell her that your mother's sick and that you've come for your father," my grandmother ordered me. I repeated what she'd said. Mrs. Kleiner opened the door. "Oh," she cried, "it is Mrs. Sutton and little John. Oh, you did frighten me. Is the mother very sick? I shall call the father."

"Let me go to him," my grandmother said. We were inside the hall then, and I put her hand on the railing of the stairway. She had started up before Mrs. Kleiner tried to stop her. "I've a message for him," said my grandmother. Mrs. Kleiner and I followed her. At the top of the stairs I turned her toward the front room, for I could hear the murmur of voices. I passed a door and wondered if Mattie Kleiner were hiding behind it. "Oh, we must not go in," Mrs. Kleiner pleaded. "The men will not want us to go in." She tried to stop us, but my grandmother turned, looking at her as if she could see her. "I've always followed my own conscience, ma'am," she said, "not my husband's, nor my son's, nor any other man's."

From within the front room came the sound of the voices, growing louder and louder as we stood there, my grandmother alert, Mrs. Kleiner appalled, I myself athrill. I could hear my father's voice, short, sharp. "It's our great opportunity," he was saying. "We have only to strike the blow at England's empire, and the empire itself will arise to aid us. Twenty thousand men flung into Canada will turn the trick. French Quebec is disaffected. What if soldiers are there? We can fight them! We may die, but what if we do? We will have started the avalanche that will destroy Carthage!"

There were cries of "Right!" to him. Then a man began to talk in German. His voice rang out harshly. From the murmurs that came out to us we knew that the men were applauding his words, but we had no idea of what the words were. Mrs. Kleiner stood wringing her hands. "Who's in there?" my grandmother asked her.

"I do not know," she insisted.

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"Joe Krebs's uncle is there," I said. "I know his cough. And Mr. Winngart who keeps the delicatessen shop. And Frank Benner's father; and that's Mr. Carey's voice."

"They just meet for fun," groaned Mrs. Kleiner.

"Sure, I saw that kind of fun before," said my grandmother, "when the Fenians went after the Queen's Own."

My father's voice rose again. "We are ready to fire the torch? We are ready to send out the word to-night for the mobilization of our sympathizers? We are ready to stand together to the bitter end?"

"We are ready!" came the shout.

Then my grandmother opened the door.

Through the haze of their tobacco smoke they looked up, the dozen men crowded into the Kleiners' front bedroom, to see my grandmother standing before them, a bent old woman in her black dress and shawl, her little jet bonnet nodding valiantly from its perch on her thin white hair. She looked around as if she could see every one of them. My father had sprung forward at her coming, and, as if to hold him off, she put up one hand.

"*Is it yourself, John Sutton, who's talking here of plots, and plans, and war?*" she said. Her voice went up to a sharp edge. She flung back her head as if she defied them to answer her. All of them, my father and Joe Krebs's uncle and Mattie Kleiner's father and Mr. Carey and Mr. Winngart and the big man who'd had the blue-prints in the shop, and the others, stared at her as if she were a ghost. No one of them moved as she spoke. "'Tis a fine lot you are to be sitting here thinking ways to bring trouble on yourselves, and your wives, and your children, and your country. Who are there here of you? Is it yourself, Benedict Krebs, who's going out to fight for Germany when your own father came to this very street to get away from Prussia? Is it you, Matthew Kleiner, who gives roof to them who plot against America, you, who came here to earn a living that you couldn't earn at home? Is it you, Michael Carey, who's helping them hurt the land that's making you a rich man? Shame on you; shame on you all!"

"Why shouldn't we fight England?" Joe Carey's father said with a growl. "You'd be the last one, Mrs. Sutton, that I'd think'd set yourself against that."

"'Tis not England," said my grandmother, "that you fight with your plots. 'Tis America you strike when you strike here. And, as long as you stay here, be Americans and not traitors!"

They began to murmur at that, and my father said: "You don't know what you're talking about, mother. You'd better take John home. This is no place for either of you."

"No more than it's a place for you," she said. "Will you be coming home with me now?"

"I will not," my father said.

"Faith, and you'll all be wishing you had," she told them, "when the jails'll be holding you in the morning."

"The jails!" The big man who had held the blue-prints came closer to us. "What is it you say of jails? You have told the police, then?"

"I didn't need to," my grandmother said. "The government men have been watching this long time. 'Twill be at midnight that they'll come here. But 'tis not myself they'll be finding." I saw the men's glances flash around the room through the smoky haze before she called: "Come, Shauneen." I took her hand again and led her out of the room. Just before the door closed after us I saw that my father's face had grown very white and that Mattie Kleiner's father had dropped his pipe on the floor.

Outside the house I spoke to my grandmother tremblingly. "Do the police really know?" I asked her. She gave her dry little chuckle. "If they don't, they should," she answered; "but I was born an O'Brien, and I've never known one of them yet that ever told the police anything. No, Shauneen," she laughed, "'twas the high hill I shot at, but I'm thinking that the shot struck. We'll watch."

We crossed the street and waited in the shadow of the house at the corner. For a little while all was quiet at Kleiner's. Then I saw the tall man come out with Joe Krebs's uncle. After a time my father came out with Mr. Winngart and Mr. Carey. They walked to the other

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corner and stood there a moment before they separated. "Shall we go home now?" I asked my grandmother after I had told her what I had seen.

"Not yet," she said. "I've one more errand to do this night." I thought it might have something to do with the tall man who'd spoken to me or with the telephone call, and I wondered when she sighed. "I'm a very old woman," she seemed to be saying to herself. "I'll be ninety-one years come Michaelmas Day. Some of the world I've seen, and much of life. Out of it all I've brought but a few things. I'd thought to give these to my son. But—" She paused. "How old are you, Shauneen?" she asked me.

"Fourteen," I said.

"Old enough," she nodded. She turned her head as if she were looking for something or some one. Then: "Do you know your way to the Battery?" she asked me.

"Sure," I told her. "Are you going there?"

"We are."

It had been quiet enough in our part of town. It was quieter yet when we came to Bowling Green and walked across to the Battery. Down there, past the high buildings and the warehouses, we seemed to have come into the heart of a hush. To the north of us the sky was afire with the golden glow from the up-town lights. In front of us ran the East River and the North River. Out on Bedloe's Island I could see the shining of the Goddess of Liberty's torch. Every little while a ferry-boat, all yellow with lights, would shoot out on the water. A sailing-vessel moved slowly after its puffing tug. The little oyster-boats were coming in from the bay. A steamer glided along past it as I walked with my grandmother out toward the old Castle Garden.

On the Saturday before Joe Carey and I had come down to the piers, prowling all afternoon on the docks, watching the men bringing in the queer crates and boxes and bags while we told each other of the places from where the fruits and spices and coffee and wines had come. There were thousands and thousands of ships out there in the dark, I knew, and I began to tell my grandmother what some of the sailors had told us of how the trade of the world was crowding into New York, with the ships all pressing the docks for room. "If you could only see it!" I said to her. "I can see more than that," she said. Then: "Take me to the edge of the waters," she bade me.

Wondering and a little frightened, I obeyed her, trying to solve the while the mystery of her whim to bring me to the deserted park in the middle of the night. "Is Castle Garden over there?" she pointed. "Then I've my bearings now."

She stood alone, a little way off from me, staring seaward as if she counted the shadowy ships. The wind blew her thin white hair from under her bonnet and raised the folds of her shawl. There in the lateness of the night, alone at the edge of the Battery, she didn't seem to be my grandmother at all, but some stranger. I remembered the story I'd read somewhere of an old woman who'd brought a pile of books to a King of Rome, books that she threw away, one by one, as he refused them, until there was but one book left. When he'd bought that one from her he'd found that it was the book of the future of the empire and that he'd lost all the rest through his folly. As I looked at my grandmother I thought she must be like the old woman of the story. Even her voice sounded strange and deep when she turned to me.

"It was sixty-five years ago the seventh of November that I first stood on this soil," she said. "'Tis a long lifetime, and, thank God, a useful one I've had. Burdens I've had, but never did I lack the strength to bear them. Looking back, I'm sorry for many a word and many a deed, but I've never sorrowed that I came here."

I would have thought that she had forgotten me if she hadn't touched my arm. "You've heard tell of the famine, Shauneen," she went on, "the great famine that fell on Ireland, blighting even the potatoes in the ground? We'd a little place in Connaught then, a bit of land my father was tilling. We hadn't much, even for the place, but we were happy enough, God knows, with our singing and dancing and the fairs and the patterns. Then, little by little, we grew poorer and poorer. I was the oldest of the seven of us. My

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mother and myself'd be planning and scraping to find food for the rest of them. Every day we'd see them growing thinner and thinner. Oh, *mavrone*, the pity of it! And they looking at us betimes as if we were cheating them of their bit of a sup! Sometimes now in the dark I see them come to my bed, with their soft eyes begging for bread, and we having naught to give them. Brigid—she was the youngest of them all—died. Then my father went.

"I used to go down to the sea and hunt the wrack for bits of food. There by the shore I would look over here to America and pray, day after day, that the Lord would send to us some help before my mother should go. You don't know what it is to pray, Shauneen. Your father cannot teach you and your mother hopes you'll never learn. For prayer is born in agony, *avick*, and grief and loss and sorrow. But because you are the son of my soul I pray for you that life may teach you prayer. For when you come to the end of the road, Shauneen, you'll know that 'tis not the smoothness of the way, but the height of it and the depth of it, that measures your travelling. Far, far down in the depths I went when I prayed over there on the bleak coast of Connaught.

"God answered my prayer. There came from America food to us. There came, too, the chance for me to come here with the promise of work to do. 'Twas a drear day when I left home. How I cursed England as I looked back on the hills of Cork harbor, all green and smiling as if never a blight had cast its shadow behind them!

"'Twas a long, dreary sailing. Nine weeks we were in the crossing. A lifetime I thought it was between the day I looked on the western sea from the Connaught mountains and the day when I stood here looking back toward home. Sure life is full of lifetimes like those."

She paused a moment, but I felt as if I were under a spell that I must not break by word of mine. A cloud came over the moon and all around us grew shadowy. The big throb that the city always beats at night kept sounding like the thrumming of an orchestra waiting for the violin solo to start.

"I'd plenty of them before many years." My grandmother's voice came like the sound for which the thrumming had waited. "Did you ever think what it means to the poor souls who come here alone for their living? When you've a house of your own, Shauneen, with men servants and maid servants, don't forget that your father's mother worked out for some one. They were kind people, too, who took me to their homes. Don't forget that either. For 'tis my first memory of America. Kind they were, and just. They helped me save what I earned and they showed me ways of helping my folks at home. I'd brought out Danny and James and Ellen and Mary before the war. I met each one of them right here at Castle Garden. That's why I always think of this place as the gateway through which the Irish have come to America. Sure Ellis Island's been for the Italians and the Jews and the Greeks. We didn't wait outside the door. We came straight in," she chuckled.

"My mother wouldn't come from the old place. Long I grieved over her there in the little house where my father and Brigid had died, but after a while I knew she was happier so. Sometimes, Shauneen, I think of Ireland as an old woman, like my mother, sitting home alone in the old places, grieving, mourning, with her children out over the world, living the dreams of her nights by the fire. 'Twas here we found the freedom the Irish had been fighting for. 'Twas here, away from landlords and landholding, away from famine and persecution, that we found that life need not be a thing of sorrow. 'Twas here I met your grandfather.

"I'd nothing of my own, and your grandfather had but a trifle more when we married. I suppose 'tis brave that people would call us now. We didn't think that we were. We were young and strong and we loved each other. And we were getting along fairly well—we'd started the payments on a bit of a house of our own after your father was born—when the war came down on us.

"Your grandfather went with the brigade. Not twice did we think whether or not he should go. We knew that he owed his first duty to the country that

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had called him, and sheltered him, and given him work and hope and freedom. For he was a boy from home as I was a girl from home. I stood on the curb-stone the day he marched by, with your father in my arms, and I cheered for the flag. 'Sure he'll be walking to meet you when you come back!' I called, lifting up the child. Your grandfather never came back. He fell at Marye's Heights."

When she spoke again her voice had changed more to her every-day tone. "Well, I raised your father," she said, "and I thought I was raising him well. My arms were strong. I worked at the wash-tub morning, noon, and night. It wasn't long till I had a laundry of my own. I thought to give my son all that I'd ever wanted for myself. Perhaps that was where I made my mistake. I thought too much of the things that money can buy in those years when money was so hard to earn. Perhaps 'twas myself and no other who taught your father the cold, hard things of life, though, God knows, I'd no thought to do it. He's a good man in many ways, but he's not the man I want you to be. He's a good hater but he's not a good lover. And, faith, what's there in life but love?"

I moved a little then, and my grandmother swung me around, with her two hands on my shoulders, and, blind as she is, stared at me as if she were looking right down into my heart. "Shauneen," she said, "I have prayed, day and night, that your father might be to America the good citizen his father was. I have prayed that if America should ever need him he would stand ready for her call. I have prayed that he'd love America as I have loved America. I love Ireland, *mavrone*. Always in my heart do I see her hills as they looked on the morning I looked back on them from the sea. But I love America, too, and I wanted my son to love her even more than I do. I've wanted him to love this land as my fathers and their fathers loved Ireland. 'Twas not that I wanted him to forget my land; when he was a lad like you I'd tell him tales of Ireland's glory and of Ireland's woe. How was I to know that all it would do for him was to rouse the black hate for England? I taught him love for Ireland, but never did I teach him to set my land above his own.

"For 'twas America gave us our chance, Shauneen, when we'd no other place on earth to seek. Hard days we've known here, too, days when even the children jeered at us, but we've never felt the hand of the oppressor upon us since we touched our feet on these shores. We've been free and we've prospered. Fine houses we have and fine clothes; and 'tis a long day since I knew the pinch of hunger. This is our debt. Tell me again, Shauneen, what you see out there?"

I told her of the shining lights, of the funnels of the steamers, of the piled piers, of the little oyster-boats, of the great liners waiting the word for their sailing.

"'Twould be a fine sight," she sighed. "Do you think me a madwoman to bring you here?" she went on, as if she had read my thought. "Perhaps I am that. Perhaps I'm not. For you'll remember this night when you've forgotten many another time, just as I remember the day when my mother took me to the shrine at Knock. For this is the shrine of your country, Shauneen, this old Castle Garden, where your people set foot in the land that's given them liberty. Here it was that I told my brothers and my sisters of the future before them. Here it is that I'm telling you that your country will be the greatest nation of all the world if only you lads stay true to her. That's why I've brought you here to-night, Shauneen. I'm an old, old woman. I've not long for this earth. But I've this message for you; it's yours; this duty that your father shirks when he plots with black traitors who'd drag us into wars that are not of our choosing. Raise your hand, Shauneen. Say after me: '*As long as I live, God helping me, I shall keep my country first in my heart and, after God, first in my soul!*'"

Through the misty moonlight there came to me the memory of my mother's plea at the door of the church, my mother's cry: "Promise me that you'll set no cause but God's before your wife!" Some battle of spirit struggled within me. For an instant I was silent. Then, suddenly, as if the moon had ridden above the cloud, I saw the right. "Since all

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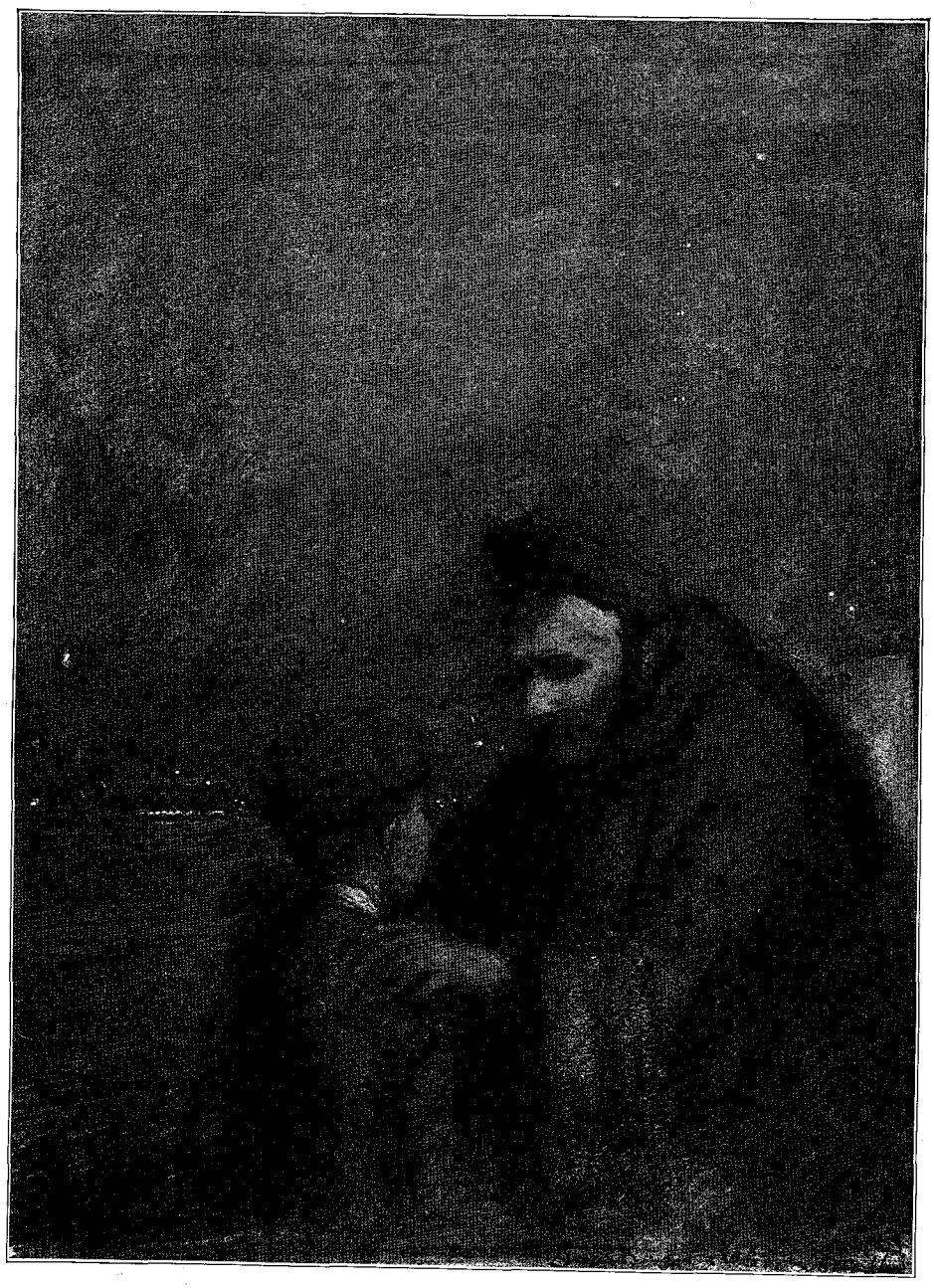

"'Twas America gave us our chance, Shauneen, when we'd no other place on earth to seek."—Page 232.

true causes come from God," I said to myself, "it is right to set my own country above anything else that may ever come." And I said the words after my grandmother.

She took my face between her hands and kissed me. "God keep you, Shauneen," she said, "for the woman who'll love you, and the children you'll teach, and the land you'll serve!"

Then through a sleeping city my grandmother and I went home.

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COMPLAINTE DE RENAUD

[ADAPTED FROM THE FRENCH OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY]

By Hamilton Fish Armstrong

Helen Maitland Armstrong

RENAUD came from the wars;
And above in the window-bow
His mother said: I see
Where comes my son Renaud.

The Mother. Renaud, Renaud, rejoice,
Your wife has borne a king.
Renaud. Neither for wife nor son
My heart again shall sing.

But quickly lay me down
Within a long white bed.
Quickly they laid him down,
And straight his spirit fled.
(*The bells sound for his passing.*)

The Queen. Now tell me, mother, tell me,
Why sounds the castle knell?
The Mother. Daughter, it is the peal
Of the rogation bell.
(*They nail up the coffin.*)

The Queen. Now tell me, mother, tell me,
What is the noise I hear?
The Mother. The carpenters in the granaries,
For harvest-time is near.
(*The priests take away the corpse.*)

The Queen. Now tell me, mother, tell me,
Who sing so sad and slow?
The Mother. Daughter, the long processions
About our houses go.

The Queen. Now tell me, mother, tell me,
What robe shall I wear to-day?
The Mother. Choose thou the decent black,
Leave off the rose and gray.

The Queen. Tell me, tell me, mother,
Whom have I then to weep?
The Mother. I cannot hide it—Renaud
Is dead and buried deep.

The Queen. Earth! Open thy arms!
Earth! Close above!
That Renaud I may rejoin—
Renaud, the king I love.

The earth forthwith opens,
Closes forthwith above.
The Queen is with Renaud,
Her king and only love.

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BONNIE MAY

BY LOUIS DODGE

A strolling player comes

ILLUSTRATIONS BY REGINALD BIRCH

XX

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE ATTIC

WHEN Bonnie May got up into the attic she gave one swift thought to the fact that Mr. Addis would be coming to the house before long and that she would not be free to receive him. Flora would be surprised to see him, but then, she concluded, Flora ought to think all the more highly of him if she decided that he had come without waiting for an invitation.

Then her mind was diverted from Mr. Addis and his affairs. It was diverted by an impulse which compelled her to put her arms swiftly about Clifton's neck, and Jack's, and express again her joy at seeing them.

"You dear boys!" she exclaimed, "it makes me feel so good—and so bad—to see you again. Oh! those old days!"

They all found chairs, and for a little time Bonnie May leaned forward in hers, her shoulders drooping, her eyes filled with yearning. Then she aroused herself. "Do you remember the time we went to Cheyenne in a sort of coach and the soldiers made us have dinner—a Christmas dinner—with them?" she asked.

Clifton remembered. He said: "And you put on a cap that came way down over your eyes, and ran into the fat old captain who had come in 'unbeknownst,' as one of the soldiers said, to inspect the quarters!"

Said Bonnie May: "And the soldiers wanted us to change our play, 'The Captain's Daughter,' so that it would be a military play instead of a sea story!"

There was a moment of silence, and then, for no apparent reason, the child and her visitors joined in a chorus of laughter.

*** A summary of the preceding chapters of "Bonnie May" appears on page 7 of the Advertising pages.

"That old play—I remember every word of the heroine's part!" said Bonnie May. "She wasn't much, was she? I remember wishing I was big enough to have the part instead of her."

She shook her head gently in the ecstacy of recalling the old atmosphere, the old ambitions, the old adventures. Then she clasped her hands and exclaimed: "Let's do an act of it, just for fun! Oh, let's do! If you could only think how hungry I've been——"

She did not wait for an answer. She hurried to Thomason's door and knocked. Her movements expressed a very frenzy of desire—of need. When Thomason did not respond she opened his door and looked into his room.

"He's not here!" she exclaimed. "Come—his things will make the grandest sailors out of you!" She had them in Thomason's room in no time.

"But we can't both be sailors," objected Jack. "We'll need a captain."

"We'll imagine him. He'll be out of sight somewhere." She opened Thomason's trunk.

"It's not—Romeo's, is it?" asked Clifton dubiously.

Bonnie May only emitted a little scream of delight. She had caught sight of two red bandanna handkerchiefs. She had them out swiftly. Also a new canvas coat and an old one.

Then she heard some one entering the room. Thomason came and stood beside her, to see what she was doing. He looked into the trunk as if he were curious to see what it contained.

Her manner betrayed no confusion at all. "So glad you've come!" she said. "It's going to be a play. Oh, the very thing! You can be one of the sailors, Thomason, and then we can have the captain, too." She appealed to Clifton and Jack. "Won't he make a perfectly splendid sailor?" she demanded.

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Drawn by Reginald Birch.

"Look at them!" she screamed. "Look! look!"—Page 239.

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They agreed that he would be an ideal sailor.

Thomason hadn't the slightest idea what it all meant. But when she tied one of the red bandanna handkerchiefs in a special fashion around the neck of one of the actors he concluded that it was going to be some kind of a game. Or possibly he feared he was going to lose his handkerchiefs.

"Put one on me!" he suggested.

And Bonnie May put one on him.

Then she happened to look at one of the window-shades. "Earrings!" she exclaimed. "They used to look so delightfully wicked!"

With Clifton's aid she removed several brass rings from the window-shades.

"I won't need them," said Clifton. "You know, I am to be the captain."

So the rings were hung in Jack's ears and Thomason's.

"Splendid!" cried Bonnie May. She inspected the result critically. "If we only had . . . Thomason! is there any blacking?"

Thomason found a box of blacking in Baron's room.

She dipped her finger into it and drew a series of sinister lines across Jack's unlined face.

Clifton proffered a criticism. "You're putting on too much. He's to be a sailor —not a pirate."

"No, only a sailor. But he ought to look a little frightful." She stood back in admiration of her work.

Thomason had begun more clearly to understand. "Put some on me," he invited.

Clifton, in the meantime, had found a golf-cap which had been handed down from Baron to Thomason. It did not make a thoroughly realistic captain of him, but it was the best he could do. He was trying to recall some of the telling phrases in "The Captain's Daughter." He could improvise, if necessary. He looked on seriously while Bonnie May put the finishing touches on Thomason's face.

It was then that Mrs. Harrod appeared.

"Oh! I'm sure I'm intruding!" she cried. She looked with profound amazement at every face in the room.

"You're not intruding at all!" declared Bonnie May. "It's to be a play, you know. You can be the audience, if you will."

Mrs. Harrod began to laugh almost helplessly. Then she checked herself, because she perceived that Bonnie May was deeply in earnest.

"Of course!" she responded. "I make a very good audience. I'll be delighted to help."

She took a chair and became, immediately, a highly inspiring audience. Still, she was amazed. She had never been told by any of the Barons that Bonnie May had formerly been "of the profession."

"We'll do only the third act," decided Bonnie May, addressing the two actors, "where the ship sinks and the raft is seen at sea." She ended by glancing at Mrs. Harrod, who nodded as if she really preferred to witness only the third act.

"We'll need a raft, of course," she said. She glanced about the room. The trunk was not large enough to hold two and contribute to a realistic effect. "It will have to be the bed," she decided. "Thomason, you and Jack will sit on the bed. And you'll have to remember that you're on a raft in a storm. The storm is so severe that you nearly fall off the raft."

"Is it?" asked Thomason. He seemed incredulous.

"It will be. Jack will let you know when. You look at him once in a while and do just as he does."

There was an explosion of shrill laughter in the adjoining room and then the McKelvey girls appeared.

They seemed quite startled and ready to run, even after they saw Mrs. Harrod.

But Mrs. Harrod reassured them. "Come right in," she called cordially. "It's to be a play, and as yet we have a miserably small audience."

They drifted a little farther into the room, wide-eyed.

It was here that Clifton rebelled. "Oh, look here!" he protested, "it will look so silly!"

"Just because we have an audience!" retorted Bonnie May blankly. Then, with feeling: "If you've got used to playing to empty seats it will do you good to have somebody looking at you. Now, do be sensible."

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"I shall be awfully disappointed not to see the play—that is, the third act," protested Mrs. Harrod.

"Well, go ahead," said Clifton. But he looked decidedly shamefaced.

Bonnie May took her position in the middle of the room. She meant to explain what it was they were about to do. She did not know that Flora had come in and was standing just inside the door, nor did she know that Victor and Mr. Addis also arrived a moment later.

"This is the situation," she began. "I am the daughter of the captain of a sailing vessel. Two of the sailors love me, but they have to keep still about it because I am so far above them. We're all on the ship, on a voyage, you understand. I love *one* of the sailors, but I'm afraid to admit it for fear my father will be angry. Then one of the sailors speaks to my father—about his love for me, you know. But my father tells him he must never be guilty of such boldness again. Then the two sailors lead a mutiny, in the hope of getting control of the ship. But the mutiny fails and the two leaders are put in irons.

"I feel so sorry for them that I plan their escape. I know I cannot marry either of them, but I pity them just the same. So I take some of the rest of the crew into my confidence, and they construct a raft in secret. Then one night when we are within sight of land I get the other sailors to release the two men who are in irons and throw them overboard, together with the raft. I mean it all for their own good, though they make the mistake of thinking I wish to have them murdered. Of course my father isn't allowed to know anything about all this. It's done while he is asleep."

"A likely story!" interpolated Clifton.

"A very fine situation," amended Bonnie May. "It is arranged that the sailors who are my confederates are to tell my father, when he wakes, that the two prisoners made their escape and were trying to murder him, when they, the other sailors, threw them overboard in a desperate fight.

"Then comes the third act, which we are about to present. A storm comes up and the ship strikes a rock. We are about to sink when the raft drifts into sight. The two sailors who were prisoners are on it. My father urges me to join the sailors on the raft so that I may be saved. But I know they believe I plotted their murder, and I am more afraid of them than of the sinking ship. The climax comes when the ship sinks and I am thrown into the sea. Of course, the two sailors rescue me. Now, we will imagine that the curtain has just gone up on the third act."

She turned for an inspection of the "company," and caught sight of Flora, Victor, and Mr. Addis just inside the doorway.

"Don't mind us," said Flora. "We hope we're not interrupting."

But Bonnie May was not to be embarrassed now. She scarcely took pains to answer beyond a swift—"Not at all!" She was earnestly shaping her mood for the work ahead of her.

Her intensity had created a really strange atmosphere. Nothing louder than a whisper could be heard in the room, and even whispering soon ceased.

"Now, captain—or father—take your place on the bridge, where you belong."

Clifton proceeded with the utmost seriousness to climb up on Thomason's table. He stood at one end so that there would be room for Bonnie May also.

"The sailors will now take their places on the raft," was the next order. "You know, you're not supposed to be visible until you hear the line, 'The ship is sinking,' and then you want to remember that you are in a violent storm."

Jack and Thomason climbed to the middle of the bed and sat down awkwardly, both looking in the same direction, like rowers in a boat.

"And remember you have paddles in your hands," reminded Bonnie May.

"I have a paddle," responded Jack.

"I ain't," objected Thomason.

"Oh, yes, you have," declared Jack, "one just like mine." He took a stroke with an imaginary paddle, held suitably.

"Well—I have a paddle," conceded Thomason.

Bonnie May was then helped to the "bridge," beside Clifton.

Clifton began. He was not quite sure about the lines, but he recalled the situation clearly enough. "Best go below, my

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daughter," were the words which filled the room with ringing effect. "I have not seen a gull since the second watch ended, and they do not hide from ordinary storms. I fear we may be caught in a tempest."

Bonnie May clasped her hands in a frenzy of earnestness. Her words came with intense eloquence: "Let me stay with you, father. I fear no storm while I am by your side."

Her voice filled the room with tones which were intense, even, resonant, golden.

Mrs. Harrod, regarding her incredulously, put out a hand and touched Flora on the arm. No one else stirred.

There came Clifton's response: "But, child, I tell you Davy Jones's locker fairly gapes in gales like this. I bid you go below."

The response came with even greater intensity: "But tell me first, father: would a raft live in such a sea as this?"

So the rather silly lines were repeated back and forth. But they scarcely seemed silly. The two players were putting a tremendous earnestness into them, and the "audience" felt no inclination at all to smile.

The two players came to the point in the story where the ship struck a rock, and their intensity was more than doubled. The raft began its part in the scene, but nobody looked at it for a time

Clifton was trying to compel Bonnie May to consent to board the raft. He had seized her arm roughly and was threatening her. She screamed her refusal. Then it came time for her to behold the murderous looks on the faces of the two men on the raft.

"Look at them!" she screamed. "Look! Look!" She pointed at the raft, her eyes wide with terror. The "audience" could not refrain from looking at the raft.

Jack and Thomason were wielding their imaginary paddles with great vigor. Jack had also begun to lurch from right to left, as a man might do on a storm-tossed raft. Thomason, catching the drift of things, was imitating him.

And then, unfortunately, Thomason's bed gave way. With an ear-splitting crash it collapsed just as Bonnie May screamed: "Look! Look!"

And of course it was at that precise instant that Mrs. Baron came rushing into the room.

XXI

AFTER THE CURTAIN WAS LOWERED

Mrs. Baron had returned from her calling expedition earlier than she had expected to. She had had a feeling that something might go wrong. Prescience is really a wonderful thing.

Now, as the poor lady stood within Thomason's room she was quite terrified. For the moment there had been a dreadful din. And now, looking at Thomason, she caught the rebellious expression in his round, innocent eyes. She saw that he had brass rings in his ears. Unfortunately she did not associate the brass rings with the window-blinds. And his face was horribly streaked. His right leg was sticking up in air quite inelegantly, and he was clawing at some other unspeakable person in an effort to regain his equilibrium.

And then there was Bonnie May with an insane light in her eyes. And behind Bonnie May was a smirking creature who grinned maliciously at Mrs. Baron as if he and she shared some guilty secret in common. Certainly she did know the man.

Moreover, there stood Flora, looking impossibly demure, with the man Addis by her side. Addis was looking as if her arrival had provoked him. His look seemed to say: "If you don't like it, why don't you run along?"

Mrs. Baron did not stop to take in any of the others. At first she was speechless, as the saying is, though she was trying to shape certain comments which she meant to direct at Bonnie May.

She opened her mouth once and again quite helplessly. Then she found her voice.

"You little—limb of Satan!" The words came with difficulty. In that instant her features looked quite unlovely. Bonnie May might have told her that elderly people ought never, under any circumstances, to become violently angry.

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But Bonnie May was in no condition to utter elemental truths.

"You awful little—wretch!" added Mrs. Baron. "No sooner do I turn my back than you disgrace me! You open my door to—the whole street!"

Bonnie May was blinking rapidly. She was very pale. If you dreamed that you were finding large sums of money, and some one threw a bucket of cold water on you, and you woke up to find yourself in the poorhouse. . . . Her mental state was something like that.

She had not been quite sorry that the bed collapsed. Some of the secondary cells in her brain had been warning her, as she stood on the "bridge," that the third act could scarcely be made to come to a true climax. She couldn't be projected into the sea, really. She would have to step tamely down from the table and begin to talk in a commonplace fashion.

Under favorable conditions the collapse of the bed would have been a relief.

But now she stood looking at Mrs. Baron, trying to reach her soul through her angry eyes. She shrank so from being humiliated before her friends—the old and the new. If Mrs. Baron, who had been so kind in many unimportant ways and times, could only spare her now!

"If you will permit me, madam—" began Clifton.

"Who are these—gentlemen?" demanded Mrs. Baron, still wrathfully regarding Bonnie May—Bonnie May and no other.

"They are my friends," said Bonnie May. "They have known me always. And, really, you know, we weren't doing anything wrong!"

Clifton had assisted her to the floor, and now, after an appealing step in Mrs. Baron's direction, and the swift conclusion that nothing she could do would save the situation, she broke into tears and rushed from the room.

"Bonnie May!" called Clifton, with overflowing solace in his tone. He ran after Bonnie May. The other actor, casting brass rings and red bandanna to the floor, followed.

"Emily Boone!" The voice was Mrs. Harrod's. "I think you might blame us, if it's all so terrible. We encouraged her. We *enjoyed* it."

Mrs. Baron now turned toward the assembled group. She seemed dazed. "I—I didn't know you were here!" she said, her voice trembling weakly. And then—"I don't care! What would any woman do, coming home and finding strangers and—and such a scene in her house?"

"We invited them in, mother," confessed Baron weakly.

"Yes," echoed Flora, "they were old companions of Bonnie May's, and we thought it would be nice to invite them in!"

"And I suppose you invited—*him* in, too?" retaliated Mrs. Baron, indicating Addis by a scornful, slight movement of her head.

The effect of all this upon Flora was most distressing. Could her mother so far forget herself as to reveal family differences in the presence of Mrs. Harrod and the McKelvey girls? Her wounded eyes fairly begged for mercy.

Addis promptly came to her relief.

"No, she didn't, Mrs. Baron. I just dropped in." His voice, by reason of its bigness and calmness, had the effect of making every one in the room feel how petty and needless had been the unpleasantness which Mrs. Baron's arrival had created. His hair seemed more bristling than ever as he added: "If you will permit me, I'll bid you good day." He made a rather stiff bow, which was meant to include every one in the room, and turned to go.

But here Mrs. Harrod interfered again. "Peter!" she called.

The uttering of the unfamiliar given name created profound surprise in certain minds.

"Peter!" she repeated. "I won't have you go away like that. I want you to know Mrs. Baron better than you seem to know her. She doesn't mean half what she says. Emily, tell him I'm right!" She looked commandingly at Mrs. Baron. It was evident that she had a nature which was not to be subdued by trivial mishaps.

Mrs. Baron flinched. "Who is Peter?" she demanded feebly.

"If you don't know, I advise you to cultivate your son's friends. Do you mean that you don't know Peter Addis?

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Why, he's been like a son to me. You ought to have known how fond I am of him—and the colonel, too. I'm surprised you've never met him at our house."

"I never did," said Mrs. Baron, swallowing with difficulty.

"Well, for goodness' sake let's go down-stairs—please excuse me for suggesting, Emily, in your house—and behave ourselves. I suppose we've all been at fault—all except that delightful child. I'm going to find her and tell her so!"

"It was so funny!" declared the elder Miss McKelvey, appealing tremulously to Mrs. Baron and patting her on the arm. She thought of laughing, which was, she believed, the easiest thing to do in all sorts of circumstances.

Mrs. Harrod's brain was working energetically. She had been reading various faces, and she realized that even yet Mrs. Baron had not spoken to Addis. She drew conclusions. On the way down-stairs she kept Addis close to her.

"Do you know, Peter," she said, in large, cheerful tones, "I think it's downright shabby for you to neglect us as you have done of late. I miss those old evenings so!—when you and the colonel used to come in from hunting, and sit down and eat like two famished boys, and bring the atmosphere of outdoors with you. Do you remember how the dogs used to slip into the house, in spite of the colonel's scolding, and put their heads on your knees while you ate supper? Those were the occasions that made a home worth having."

Addis, entirely satisfied with the turn affairs were taking, responded heartily: "I certainly do remember. I've often wondered if the colonel had Queenie yet. There was a dog for you!"

"Oh, no! Queenie's been dead over a year. It's Prince and Hector now—Queenie's puppies. The colonel says they're every bit as smart as their mother was. I wish you'd come out soon. On a Sunday, if you'd rather find us alone. We'll sit out under the grape-arbor. You know, the grapes are just getting ripe. Those little vines have grown up beautifully. The colonel always has his bottle of what-do-you-call-it out there, and his pipe, and I send the servants away and prepare a little lunch——"

They were in the sitting-room now, too eagerly engaged in their conversation to think of sitting down, and Mrs. Baron was waiting humbly to regain control of the situation.

Mrs. Harrod was not unmindful of her old friend's discomfort, but she had an idea she was engaged in giving a patient a dose of medicine and that she ought to be careful that none of it was spilt.

"If you'll excuse me," said Mrs. Baron, now thoroughly dejected, "I'll look for Bonnie May. I think I ought to have a talk with her."

She had heard every word that Mrs. Harrod had spoken to Mr. Addis. And she had heard enough. She went to Bonnie May's room. She was too confused to realize that Flora accompanied her. But as she stood staring miserably into the empty room she heard Flora's comforting voice.

"She's probably down-stairs, mother, with—with her friends."

Flora went to the stairway and called. There was no response. She listened, anxiously turning her eyes toward her mother, but there was no sound of voices on the floor below.

"They wouldn't have remained in the house a minute," declared Mrs. Baron, who was now frankly remorseful.

"But Bonnie May—she may have gone back to talk to Mrs. Shepard," suggested Flora. They could hear Mrs. Harrod's voice, pleasantly masterful. She had introduced Addis to the McKelvey girls, now that she happened to think of it, and they were slipping eager gusts of laughter and disconnected phrases into the conversation.

Mrs. Baron and Flora went down-stairs and appealed to Mrs. Shepard.

Bonnie May had gone out, Mrs. Shepard said. She had come down-stairs and telephoned something in great haste, and then she had induced her two gentlemen friends to go away. An automobile had come quite promptly, and she had gone away in it.

Mrs. Baron turned away from her daughter and rested her hand against the wall at the foot of the staircase. Her attitude spelled repentance and fear.

She went up into the child's room, and

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Flora followed close enough to hear a low, tremulous cry of despair.

"I wouldn't, mother!" soothed Flora, whose eager voice brought Mrs. Harrod and the others.

Mrs. Baron was standing beside a little work-table and a chair that were Bonnie May's. Her face was quivering. "I'm a disagreeable old creature," she declared. "I don't deserve to have any happiness."

One hand fumbled with a handkerchief, which she lifted to her eyes. From the other, slowly relaxing, a handful of roses and ridiculous little silk butterflies fluttered slowly to the floor.

"I want you all to leave me—please!" she begged. "I'm not fit to be seen." She put forth a hand to Mrs. Harrod. "Do come back again soon," she said. "And you, too," she added, extending her hand to the McKelvey girls. And then, as she dabbed her discolored eyes, she concluded with—"And you, too!" She glanced aside, but her hand went out to Addis.

Then she disappeared into her own room and softly closed the door.

Flora's eyes were shining as she escorted the party down-stairs. "She's only gone to visit friends," she declared. "She'll be back."

The McKelvey girls burst from the front door ahead of the others. They were cheerful creatures who were not to be depressed by the scenes they had just witnessed.

Flora, standing in the hall to let the others pass, heard them shrieking joyously, "Oh, what a lovely new car you've got, Mrs. Harrod," and then she heard Mrs. Harrod explaining: "A birthday present from the colonel."

They had all passed out now except Addis, and when Flora opened the door a little wider for him he stood still an instant and looked out. The others were out there inspecting Mrs. Harrod's car.

Then he took Flora's hand in his and closed the door firmly and securely. It was fully a minute before the door was opened again, and then Addis descended the steps alone.

Mrs. Harrod and the McKelvey girls forgot the new machine immediately. They were all looking at Peter Addis. And they were all thinking precisely the same thing—namely, that they had never in all their lives seen a man who looked more extraordinarily handsome and happy.

XXII

THE MANSION IN SHADOW

When Bonnie May did not return to the mansion that night the fact was not commented upon by any member of the family. It was not quite remarkable that she should spend the night with the Thornburgs. That was where she had gone, of course.

It is true that Mrs. Baron was decidedly uncomfortable. The rupture that had occurred was more serious than any that had preceded it. Possibly she had gone too far. There was the possibility that Bonnie May might nurse a very proper grievance and decide that it was pleasanter to live with the Thornburgs than to continue her residence at the mansion.

In brief, she might refuse to come back. That was Mrs. Baron's fear. It was a fear which hurt the more because she was unwilling to speak of it.

However, when the next day passed and night came, Baron took no trouble to conceal his anxiety—for still Bonnie May had not returned.

He called up the Thornburgs by telephone. Was Bonnie May there? He asked the question very affably. Yes, came back the reply—in an equally affable tone—she was there. Would he like to speak to her?

No, she need not be troubled; he merely wished to be sure she was there.

Baron believed, without expressing his belief to any one, that it would be a mistake to manifest anxiety about the late guest—or probably the temporarily absent guest. So it came about that one day followed another, and Bonnie May did not come back, and the several members of the family pretended that nothing was specially wrong.

It was Mrs. Baron who first thrust aside a wholly transparent pretense.

"That's the trouble with that Thornburg arrangement," she said at dinner one day, apropos of nothing that had

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been said, but rather of what everybody was thinking. "I don't blame her for being offended; but if the Thornburgs were not making efforts to keep her she'd have been back before now. On the whole, we were really very good to her."

"Oh, I shouldn't worry," declared Baron briskly. "She'll be back. If she doesn't come before long I'll go over there and—and tole her back."

A second week passed—and she had not returned. And now her absence was making a distinct difference in the mansion. The dinner and sitting-room conversations became listless; or during the course of them a tendency toward irritability was developed.

One day Mrs. Baron sought her son alone in his attic. Said she: "Do you suppose she's not coming back at *all?*" She looked quite wan and bereft as she asked the question.

Baron felt remorseful. "Of course she is," he assured her. "I'm going over to the Thornburgs'. I'm going to see about it."

Bonnie May was acting foolishly, he thought. The Thornburgs were not keeping faith. Yet it was a difficult matter for him to make a clear case against either Bonnie May or the Thornburgs, and he was by no means comforted by a little event which transpired one morning.

He encountered the two actors as he was leaving the mansion, and his impulse was to speak to them cordially. But in returning his greeting they manifested a well simulated faint surprise, as if they felt sure Baron had made a mistake. They nodded politely and vaguely and passed on.

In his mind Baron charged them angrily with being miserable cads, and he was the more angry because they had snubbed him in such an irreproachable fashion.

Even Baron, Sr., became impatient over the long absence of Bonnie May. Realizing that his usual practise of watching and listening was not to be effective in the present instance, he leaned back in his chair at dinner one evening and asked blandly: "What's become of the little girl?"

And Mrs. Baron made a flat failure of her effort to be indifferent. Her hand trembled as she adjusted her knife and fork on her plate. "Why, I don't know," said she. "You know, she has two homes." But she was afraid to attempt to look anywhere but at her plate.

Baron was astounded by the utter dejection which his mother tried to conceal. Why, she loved the child—really. She was grieving for her.

And that evening he emerged from the house with much grimness of manner and made for the Thornburgs'.

The dusk had fallen when he reached the quiet street on which the manager lived. Street-lamps cast their light among the trees at intervals. In the distance a group of children were playing on the pavement. Before the Thornburg home silence reigned, and no one was visible.

Yet as Baron neared the approach to the house he paused abruptly. He had been mistaken in believing there was no one near. In the heavy shadow of a maple-tree some one was standing—a woman. She was gazing at the lower windows of the Thornburg residence. And there was something in her bearing which seemed covert, surreptitious.

He, too, looked toward those windows. There was nothing there beyond a frankly cheerful interior. He could see no one.

What was the woman looking at? He glanced at her again, and a bough, swaying in the breeze, moved from its place so that the rays from a near-by lamp shone upon the figure which appeared to be standing on guard.

She was over-dressed, Baron thought. Under an immense velvet hat weighted down with plumes masses of blond hair were visible. Her high, prominent cheek-bones were not at all in keeping with the girlish bloom which had been imparted to her cheeks by a too obvious artifice. She had caught up her skirt lightly in one hand, as if the attitude were habitual, and one aggressively elegant shoe was visible.

He had paused only momentarily. Now he proceeded on his way, passing the woman in the shadow with only half the width of the sidewalk between her and him.

He had recognized her. She was the woman who had stood in the theatre that night talking to Thornburg—who had

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visited Thornburg in his office. Could she be Miss Barry? Baron wondered.

A maid let him into the house and drew open a sliding door, revealing the lighted but empty drawing-room. She took his card and disappeared.

He sat for a time, counting the heavy minutes and listening intently for sounds which did not reach him. Then the manager and his wife entered the room, both bending upon him strangely expectant glances.

Baron arose. "I've taken the liberty—" he began, but Thornburg instantly swept all formalities aside.

"That's all right," he said. "Keep your seat." Then, obviously, they waited for something which they expected he had come to say.

But he was listening for the sound of Bonnie May's voice. He seemed almost absent-minded to the man and woman who were intently regarding him.

Then Thornburg, plainly afraid of offending his guest by a too impulsive or impatient word, fell back upon commonplaces. He concluded that he must wait to hear what Baron had come to say.

"You've heard about Baggott's good luck?" he asked.

"I think not," replied Baron, not at all cordially.

"His play. They're getting ready to put it on in Chicago. His people have a theatre there that's not engaged just now. There's to be an elegant production—first-class people and everything. Baggott's gone on to look after the rehearsals. We ought to have it here by the first of the year—or earlier, if a number two company is organized."

"I hadn't heard," said Baron. "I haven't seen Baggott lately." With intention he spoke listlessly. Thornburg wasn't coming to the point, and he didn't intend to be played like a fish.

An uncomfortable silence fell again, and again Baron found himself listening intently.

And then he could bear the suspense no longer. He leaned toward Thornburg with animation. "Look here, Thornburg," he said, "I don't believe you're playing fair!"

"You might explain that," responded the manager curtly.

"You know what the agreement was. I don't believe she'd stay away like this unless she'd been restrained."

Thornburg's only response was a perplexed frown. It was Mrs. Thornburg who first took in the situation. She arose, painfully agitated, and faced Baron. "Do you mean that she isn't at your house?" she demanded. Her voice trailed away to a whisper, for already she read the answer in his eyes.

Baron sank back in his chair. "She hasn't been for weeks," he replied.

Thornburg sprang to his feet so energetically that the caller followed his example. "I thought it was you who wasn't playing fair," he said. And then he stared, amazed at the change in Baron's manner.

The younger man was rushing from the room. There had come to him unbidden the picture of the two actors who had snubbed him in front of his house—a recollection of their studied aloofness, their cold, skilful avoidance of an encounter with him. They had taken her!

But at the door he paused. "But I telephoned to you," he said, remembering. "You told me she was here."

"She was here the day you telephoned. She went away the next day."

Baron frowned. "She went away—where?"

"She went in the machine. Of course we supposed——"

Thornburg hurried to the telephone and was speaking to his chauffeur in a moment. "Oliver? Come to the house a moment, Oliver—and hurry."

He replaced the receiver and hurried back to meet the chauffeur.

The soldierly appearing young chauffeur was standing at attention before them in a moment.

"We want to know if you can remember where you took Bonnie May the last time she left the house."

"Perfectly, sir. She asked me to stop at the Palace Theatre. She said she was expecting to meet a friend there. And she told me I was not to wait—that she wouldn't need the car again that afternoon."

Fifteen minutes later Baron was ringing the bell of the house next to the mansion. He couldn't recall the two act-

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ors' names, but he described them. He wished to see them on urgent business.

But they had paid their bill and gone away. The woman who met Baron at the door was sure they had said something about finishing their engagement at the Folly and about leaving the city.

As Baron turned away from the door it seemed to him that the street had suddenly gone empty—that the whole world was a haunted wilderness.

XXIII

"THE BREAK OF DAY"

"MR. VICTOR BARON, please."

An usher with an absurdly severe uniform and a frankly cherubic countenance had pushed aside the hangings and stood looking into the Baron box in the Barrymore Theatre.

It was the night of the first performance of Baggott's play, "The Break of Day," in Thornburg's theatre, and the Barons were all present—by special and urgent invitation.

Baron had been studying the aisles full of people, eagerly seeking their seats, and listening to the continuous murmur which arose all over the house. But when he heard his name called he arose and slipped out into the shadows.

"Mr. Thornburg sends his compliments and asks if you'll be good enough to visit him in his office for a few minutes." Thus the cherubic usher.

The Barrymore office was off from the lobby, but it commanded a view not only of the street but also of the procession of men and women who passed the ticket office.

Thornburg had left the door open, and Baron, approaching, caught sight first of a considerable expanse of dazzling white shirt-front and then of the manager's ruddy, smiling countenance. Evidences of prosperity were all about. A procession of motor-cars continued to stop before the theatre to deposit passengers. Throughout the lobby there was the shimmer of costly fabrics worn by women, the flashing of jewels, the rising and falling of gusts of laughter, and a chaos of happy speech. And everywhere there was the glitter of onyx panels and pillars, and the warmth of hooded lights, and the indefinable odor of fine raiment and many delicate perfumes.

Thornburg seized Baron's hand and shoved the door to with his foot. Happiness radiated from him. "I've a secret to tell you," he began. "I want you to be one of the first to know."

"Let's have it!" responded Baron, trying to reflect a little of the manager's gayety.

"You'll remember my telling you that I had a little daughter by my first wife?"

"I remember."

"I've found her again!"

"Ah, that's fine!"

"And that isn't all. You're going to see her to-night."

Baron waited.

"She's the girl they've been making all that fuss about in Chicago—who's been known only as 'The Sprite.' She's got the leading part in 'The Break of Day.'"

Baron felt his way cautiously. He couldn't mar such superb complacency, such complete happiness. "And Mrs. Thornburg—" he began haltingly.

"God bless her, it's all right with her. She knows, and she's as happy as I am."

Baron shrunk back with a sense of utter loss. "Thornburg," he said, "I want you to tell me—is the little girl the daughter of—of Miss Barry?"

The manager clapped a heavy hand on Baron's shoulder. "No," he responded. And after a moment's almost pensive reflection he regained his buoyant manner and resumed: "I'd like you to meet her. Between acts, or after the play. You and your family. She's young. I think a little attention, especially motherly attention, will mean a lot to her just now. Of course she mustn't be worried to-night; but suppose we make up a little party, after the performance, and make her feel that she's got friends here?"

Baron couldn't think of refusing. "I'd have time to pay my respects, at least," he agreed. "And I'll put the case before my mother and the others, just as you have stated it. I think perhaps she'll consent."

"That's a good fellow. I'll be looking for you," concluded Thornburg, and then he joyously shoved Baron out of the office.

The footlights were being turned on

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and the asbestos curtain lifted as Baron returned to his seat. Then the orchestra began to play, and under cover of the music Thornburg's secret and his invitation were passed on to Mrs. Baron and to the others in the box.

Baron did not catch his mother's response, and she did not repeat it. She had turned to listen to the music. For the moment the orchestra was commanding a good deal of attention. A cycle of popular melodies was being played, and under the spell of the singing violins the outside world was being made to recede into the distance while the mimic world became real.

Men and women forgot that out on the winter streets, only a few yards from them, there was passing that disinterested throng which always passes the door of every theatre; the eager, the listless, the hopeful, the discouraged, and that sprinkling of derelicts who have no present drama at all but who are bearing inevitably on toward the final tragedy.

The orchestra completed the popular melodies; and after a brief interval the leader rapped his music-rack with his baton to enjoin attention. Then he lifted his hand as if in benediction over a player to his left, and a wood-wind instrument announced a new theme—penetratingly, arrestingly. Then the strains of "The Ride of the Valkyries," with their strident and compelling quality, filled the theatre.

Baron was startled by the touch of a hand on his shoulder. Baggott was leaning toward him. "That's to create the right atmosphere," he whispered, nodding toward the orchestra. "It's to put the idea of the supernatural into everybody's mind, you know." He withdrew then.

Baron thought that was just like Baggott—to be explaining and asserting himself as if he were doing it all. He was glad to be rid of him. He wanted to feel, not to think. Then he realized that the musicians had laid aside their instruments and that the curtain was being slowly lifted.

Applause greeted the setting. The stage represented the heart of a forest in midsummer—"the heart of the summer storms." There was a shadowy dell shut in by a wilderness. One giant tree in the foreground rose to invisible heights. At the back a little stream trickled down over a mossy bank, and during its course it formed a silent pool in one silent place, and before this a Psyche innocently regarded her face in the mirror of water.

Then the foliage of the big tree began to be agitated by a rising storm, and the leaves shook as if they were being beaten by descending drops.

For a moment the summer-shower effect continued. Then from the highest point on the stage visible to the audience a character in the drama appeared—the Sprite. She sprang from some unseen point to the limb of the ancient tree. The limb gave gently, and she sprang to the next limb below. The secure platforms making this form of descent possible were hidden from the audience by heavy foliage. The descent continued until the fairy figure sprang lightly to the stage.

She was clad in a costume of leaves, the prevailing color of which was a deep green rising to natural tints of yellow. She wore a hood which was cunningly fashioned from one big leaf, around which an automobile veil of the gauziest texture was wound so that it concealed her face.

She began unwinding this veil as she spoke her first lines.

"Back again where the storms are!" she was saying. "Ah, it is good, after that dreadful calm."

Baron realized that his mother had lifted her hands to her bosom as if to stifle a cry. For himself, a thrill shot through his body, and then he leaned forward, rigid, amazed.

For when the Sprite had removed the last fold of her veil and faced the audience he beheld again, after long waiting and vain search, the lost guest, Bonnie May.

She wore her hair in a little golden knot at the crown of her head; the waist-line of her dress was just below her arms, and a pair of tiny golden sandals adorned her feet. When she would have lain the veil aside a screen of leaves parted and a Titan sprang to her side to render service.

And so the play began.

But for the moment Baron could not think about the play. He was thinking of Baggott—Baggott, who had known all the time. Then again he felt a touch on his arm, and, turning, he found himself

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looking into the playwright's eyes; and he could perceive only the delight of a childish creature, jubilant because he had achieved an innocent surprise.

He tried to respond with a smile—and could not. But little by little the play caught his attention. The impression grew upon him that "The Break of Day" was a play of that indefinable quality which goes unfailingly to the heart. But more—he realized that Bonnie May was carrying her audience with her with the ease and certainty of an artist. She ceased to be on trial almost immediately, and those who watched her began to feel rather than to think, to accept rather than to judge.

When the first intermission came Baron slipped out of the box and went in search of Baggott, whom he found standing apart in the foyer.

"I don't have to tell you I'm glad," he began; and then, with furrowed brow, he added, "but surely . . ."

Baggott read his thought accurately. "I wanted to give you the surprise of your life! You can't help being pleased?"

"Pleased! Certainly! But we've been distressed about her."

"Oh—distressed! Well, she belongs to the theatre. She always has. *I* saw that right away!"

"But if we'd only known! I don't suppose we could have stood in the way."

"But it was her idea—at first. She didn't want you to know. I mean when we put the piece on here for a try-out—at first."

"You don't mean——"

"Of course! It was when you were laid up. I thought she'd lay down on me, because you wouldn't see her that night. And then came the Chicago engagement. I took my mother along to look after her. I didn't know she hadn't told you anything for a time, and then I left it to her to do what she wanted to do. It was always her idea to take you by surprise. I think she cared more for that than for anything else. Great goodness, man, you don't imagine *you've* been treated badly?"

Baron's glance became inscrutable.

"Why, just think of it!" Baggott went on. "She's drawing the salary of a regular star. And her reputation is made."

Baron turned away almost curtly. What was to be gained by discussing Bonnie May with a creature who could only think of salary and reputation?—to whom she was merely a puppet skilled in repeating lines of some one else's fashioning?

He entered Thornburg's office. His manner was decidedly lugubrious.

The manager held out his hand expansively. "You've come to congratulate me," he said. And then he took in Baron's mood.

"Oh, I see!" he went on. "There's something that needs explaining. I played, fair with you all right, Baron. You see, I was in the dark myself in some ways."

He took occasion to light a cigar, which he puffed at absent-mindedly. "Just before Bonnie May showed up here—when you got hold of her—I learned that her mother had died. It had been kept from me. You see, I was sending the mother money. And when the little one was only a year or so old I got a letter from her mother offering to give her up to me. I've told you what happened then. I—I couldn't take her. Then I got another letter from the mother saying she was turning Bonnie May over to her sister for the time being and that I was to send the remittances to her. That was Miss Barry.

"I believed the arrangement was only temporary. I didn't understand it, of course. But when several years went by I began to suspect that something was wrong. I didn't like Miss Barry. She was never the woman her sister was. She was—well, the brazen sort of woman. I wasn't willing to leave the little daughter with her any longer. I wrote to her and told her she might send Bonnie May to me, if she cared to, but that there weren't to be any more remittances. I thought that would fetch her. I meant to put the little daughter in a home or a school somewhere. And then they blew in here and you got her—and your getting her was just the thing I wanted."

An incandescent light on the manager's desk winked once and again. "The curtain's going up," he informed Baron, and the latter hurried back to his seat.

As he entered the box a flood of cold air from the stage swept over the au-

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dience. And when his mother shivered slightly he observed that Peter Addis, sitting immediately behind her, quietly leaned forward and lifted a quilted satin wrap from a chair, placing it deftly about her shoulders.

She yielded with a nestling movement and with a backward flash of grateful recognition which told a story of their own.

The audience was stilled again as the second setting was revealed—"the home of the autumn leaves." Here was a masterpiece of designing and painting, Baron realized. A house was being constructed for the Sprite. Much disputation arose. The sort of talk which precedes the planning of a home was heard—save that the terms were grotesquely altered. Then the action was complicated by the arrival of a band of vikings driven ashore by a gale.

And then Baron, too, forgot that Bonnie May was a human being, as Baggott seemed to have done, and was lost in the ingenious whimsicality of the play.

It was after the third act—in which there was a picture of cruel winter, with all the characters in the play combating a common foe in the form of the withering cold—that the Sprite won the heartiest approval.

Thunders of applause swept over the house; and when the effect of thunder had passed there was a steady demonstration resembling the heavy fall of rain. Again and again Bonnie May bowed as the curtain was lifted and lowered, and again and again the applause took on new vigor and earnestness. And then she stepped a little forward and nodded a little toward some one back in the wings, and the curtain remained up.

She made a little speech. It seemed she had a special voice for that, too. It was lower, but elaborately distinct. The very unconventionality of it afforded a different kind of delight. Her manner was one of mild disparagement of an inartistic custom. She bowed herself from the stage with infinite graciousness.

She was a tremendous success.

It was only after the curtain went down for the last time that Thornburg appeared at the Baron box. The scene had been called "Spring—and the Fairies," and it had put the pleasantest of thoughts into the minds of the audience, which was now noisily dispersing.

"I hope you're all coming back on the stage for a minute," said the manager.

He was dismayed by Mrs. Baron's impetuosity. She was too eager to remain an instant talking to any one. She could scarcely wait to be escorted back to the stage—and yet she had no idea how to reach that unknown territory undirected. Her bearing was really quite pathetic.

And in a moment the entire party had passed through a doorway quite close to the box, and were casting about in that region where the wings touch the dressing-rooms. The players were hurrying to and fro, and one man, carrying a large waxen nose and a pair of enormous ears—he had been a gnome in the play—paused and looked curiously at the very circumspect intruders.

Somehow it did not seem at all remarkable to Baron, as it might have done, that he presently found himself confronting Miss Barry. It was plain that she had been waiting to enter the child's dressing-room, and at the approach of Thornburg she brightened—rather by intention, perhaps, than spontaneously.

"Oh, how fortunate!" she began. "You'll be able to help me, of course. I want to see the new star! I'd lost track of her." Her practised smile and shifting eyes played upon Thornburg menacingly, inquiringly, appealingly. "I want to begin planning for her again. When her engagement here is over I mean to take her with me to the coast. She's reached an age now when I can be of real help to her. Isn't it wonderful—the way she has developed?"

Thornburg had paused to hear her to the end. He realized that there was a pitiful lack of assurance—of conviction—in her manner.

When she had finished he smiled tolerantly yet with unmistakable significance. "No, Miss Barry," he said, replying to her thought rather than her words. "That's all ended now. When Bonnie May has finished her work here I shall see that she has a home in her father's house."

The party moved into the dressing-room, where Bonnie May had been robbed

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Drawn by Reginald Birch.

She had put her arms about the trembling old lady's neck, and for the moment they were both silent.—Page 250.

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of her fairy trappings and put into a modest frock. Her hair, released from its little knot, was falling about her shoulders and was being combed by a maid.

But she escaped from the maid—and for the moment from all the life which the dressing-room implied—when she saw Mrs. Baron standing in her doorway.

She had put her arms about the trembling old lady's neck, and for the moment they were both silent. And then Mrs. Baron drew back and stood a moment, her hands framing Bonnie May's face.

"You do forget that I was a disagreeable old woman!" she murmured.

"Oh, that!" came the warm response; "you know you forget just little slips when you are happy in your work. And I couldn't have remembered such a little thing, anyway, when you'd been so lovely to me!"

She took Mrs. Baron's hand in both her own and clung to it, and lifted it to her face and laid her cheek against it. "If you only knew how I've thought of you—of all of you—and I longed for you! And how much I wanted you to see me at work, so you would—would *know* me better! You know, just talking doesn't prove anything. I wanted so much to have you know that I was an—an artist!"

In the theatre the orchestra was still playing while the people filed out. In the distance there was the muffled sound of the procession of motor-cars starting and of announcers shouting numbers above the din.

It was Flora's turn to press forward and take her seat beside Bonnie May now; and while Mrs. Baron stood aside, smiling quite happily, the manager spoke to her as if he were merely continuing a conversation which had been interrupted.

"Yes, I'm particularly anxious to have you go on with—with the lessons, you know. Not just the books and music, you understand, but—well, say a general influence. You know, she's tremendously fond of all of you. I mean to get her off the stage as soon as the run here is finished. It's time for her to have a little real life. And I'd like things to go on about as they were—I mean, having her in your house, or mine, just as she feels about it. You were the first to give her a mother's attention. I'd be grateful if you felt you could go on with that."

Mrs. Baron tried to answer this quite punctiliously, but she had to turn aside to hide her eyes, and when she spoke her words were a surprise to her.

"I think you're a good man," she said. And she did not trust herself to say anything more. She was gazing at Bonnie May again, and noticing how the strange little creature was clinging to Flora's hand with both her own, and telling—with her eyes illustrating the story gloriously—of the great events which had transpired since that day when the mansion went back to its normal condition of loneliness and silence.

Baron was observing her, too. He had found a chair quite outside the centre of the picture, and he was trying to assume the pose of a casual onlooker.

But Bonnie May's eyes met his after a time and something of the radiance passed from her face. She turned away from Flora and stood apart a little and clasped her hands up nearly beneath her chin, and her whole being seemed suddenly tremulous. She was thinking of the home that had been made for her, and of how it was Baron who had opened its door. The others had been lovely, but the ready faith and the willingness to stand the brunt—these had been his.

She moved forward almost shyly until she stood before him, and then her hands went out to him.

"I must offer my congratulations, too!" he said.

But she ignored that. "Do you remember a time when we talked together about some words that we thought were beautiful—up in the attic?" she asked.

"And you told me you didn't think much of 'aunt' or 'uncle,' but that you liked 'father' and——"

"Yes, that was the time."

"I remember perfectly."

"You know, there's another word I've thought of since then that I've wished I could—could have for my own."

He seemed to be casting about for that other word.

"It's a lovely word, too. . . ." She drew closer to him. "Help me!" she pleaded, and when he looked into her eyes, a bit startled, she whispered—

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"Brother . . . brother!" Her hand was on his shoulder, and then it slipped its way to his neck.

"Ah, that *is* a good word!" said Baron. And then the tempest of affection broke, and she had her arms about his neck.

He had no idea she was so strong. She was choking him a bit. But no, it wasn't really the strength of her arms, after all, he realized.

And then, because his mother and Flora were watching, and because—well, because he was Baron, he straightened up and got possession of her hands again. He patted them lightly.

"It is a good word," he repeated. "It's one that has come to have a much bigger meaning for me since I knew you."

"And you won't think it's got anything to do with that silly old joke . . . ?"

He was really perplexed.

"You know when they say 'I'll be a sister to you!' " She was bubbling over with the old merriment now. "Just to make you keep at a distance, you know."

"Oh—no, I'll be sure it hasn't anything to do with that."

He regarded her almost dreamily as she turned again to his mother and Flora. He was thinking of the amazing buoyancy, of the disconcerting, almost estranging humor which lay always just beneath the surface; of her fine courage; of the ineradicable instinct which made everything a sort of play. They would be hers always. Or would there come a time when she would lose them? He wondered.

"There is our number!" interrupted Peter Addis, who had been listening to the voice of the announcers. He had brought the party to the theatre in his own car.

There was a reluctant movement toward the theatre.

". . . Oh, a matinee performance now and then, if she likes," Thornburg was explaining to Baron. "But for a few years, at least, that will be all. She's going to have the things she's had to go without all her life."

They followed the line of the wall around toward the front exit. The orchestra had quit playing. The time had come to extinguish the lights.

But after the others had gone Baron stood a moment alone. He looked thoughtfully toward the upper right-hand box.

"I thought she was lost that day," he mused. "I thought I was rescuing her. And now I know she wasn't really lost then. Not until afterward. And now she has found her home again."

THE END.

THE CONVERT

By Frederick Van Beuren, Jr.

BELOVÈD, my Belovèd, thou hast laid
Upon mine eyes thy magic touch; I see
More clearly now the beauties of the world,
And in them all, fairest and dearest, thee.

Dreams have come true; promises are fulfilled;
Shadow and substance have been centralized:
God takes on human semblance in thine eyes,
And offers me my ideals realized.

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These things, Belovèd, God has done through thee
That thou mayest be more holy to my mind,
And He may be more loved and thanked and praised,
Because ye two are blended, undefined.

I cannot think that any hand but thine,
Touching mine eyes, could thus have made me see
The world so fair: because I have loved, shall love
Could love no one else like this but thee.

Listen! the wind is singing. Oh! before
I loved thee, I could hear no song above
Its music. Now, cradled in melody,
There swing two whispers, "Cressida" and "Love."

The blessing of the sun, the flowers' perfume,
The sweetness of the songs of birds, all these
Thou hast enhanced by sharing, and enriched
The darkness of thy favorite cedar-trees.

I never knew the stars had so much fire,
Such friendly eyes and were so numerous,
Until that night we sat upon the bank,
Beside the stream, and they looked down on us.

For me the moon had ne'er such radiance,
Ne'er shed such mystic brightness on the air,
As on that last night-voyage, when it pearled
The sail and silvered your dear, golden hair.

I hear the ocean's deep, vibrating tones
Call the delaying river, "Come to me,"
More clearly since I knew my own heart's voice,
Under the world's unrest, calling to thee.

Oh! in thine eyes, clear wells of perfect truth,
My thirsting glances often stoop to drink
Deeply of hope and trust, and rise to find
Happiness standing beside them on the brink.

Belovèd—yes! I know the world is still
The same world that it was 'fore I knew thee,
'Tis I am changed—changed by thy magic love:
Then I was blind; now thou hast made me see!

This thou hast done; so all my gratitude
And all my love, in all the ways I've trod,
For this fair miracle thou hast performed,
I give to thee and, through thee, give to God.

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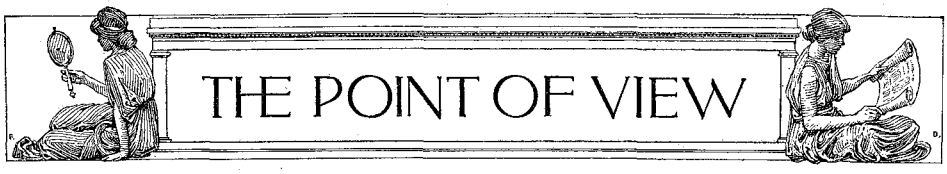

ROMANCE likes to come on horseback; the jingling spurs and bridle-irons chant a happy pæan in his ears; and from the saddle, as from a throne, he looks out over the workaday world. Romance always has been linked with riding; in the playroom mounted on a gallant rocking-chair youth rides into a land of golden deeds; later he swings in long gallops on the faithful hobby-horse into spicy and fugitive adventure. To the page on a prancing palfrey and to the cavalry-man in khaki the lure of romance is the same; the rhythm of galloping hoofs thuds always in the imagination, the lady's favor on the lance and the quivering scarlet guidon flutter alike a mysterious and eternal challenge to the spirit of youth. "To horse and away" and all the world's before one. Though at first the child demands that his stage be set—let the properties be grotesque and absurd as they will—he later enters a land of pure imagination and lives unhampered by the necessities of stage invention; "the hobby-horse is forgot"—and he gallops vicariously and battles by proxy. But after a time there comes a regeneration of the dramatic, and his roving eye lights in newly realized wonder on the docile, quietly blinking family horse.

mance and Saddle

So was Bobby, our staid old carriage-horse, commandeered by me in my youth to serve the spirit of romance. At the time I saw in him a gallant companion he was fast becoming an introspective equine. Almost all horses are introspective; they have not the inscrutability of the cat, or, having it, because of their larger form and because of their service to man, cannot express it. Cats live in a world of past ages on some other plane, and we call them inscrutable because they so seldom hasten to leave that other plane when we thrust ourselves upon them. Horses live in a sort of pathos of loneliness. A colt has an outward-looking eye, but as he grows older his interests swing in constantly decreasing circles until finally he is almost purely subjective. And as this comes upon him his eyes turn inward and gradually he holds converse with the outer world only through the medium of expressive ears. A cat is subjective and is independent; but a horse is only nobly pathetic. Even ponies, dearly loved by children, look upon the world with a vision somewhat shadowed by sadness. And Bobby, left to his solitary contemplations most of the day, was becoming more and more introspective.

Every afternoon in the placid routine of his life he mildly propelled the family surrey, albeit he did it with an air of detachment. The surrey was harnessed to him, but Bobby's manner disavowed its presence; and he jogged along the shady avenues and down the long country lanes as though he were on private business of his own. He was like an old gentleman trotting disinterestedly on his daily walk, accomplishing necessary exercise but involved in mental agitations of far greater import. But for all this air of reflection there was a certain aspect in his eyes which belied it—a sort of reserve fund of interest for those things which had not yet happened. In this wide-eyed expectation of a happy future Bobby was something of a child, something of a man—and little of a horse. He had settled down to an ambling pace in life and did not care to change his ways. His hours of leisure, and they were many, he spent in a sunny corner of the paddock whence he had a regal view over the lawns. And here, blinking quietly and meditating, he planned to pass a quiet and philosophic age—contemplating life even as a garden.

But this was not to be. Romantic youth looked upon him and saw his mild eye snorting fire; youth thought of him and he became a prancing charger. And Bobby entered into his squirehood and the days of discipline fell upon him. Fundamentally, Bobby had a dear and kindly nature, and his remonstrances were always gentle. Even when a primitive saddle, made of horse-blanket and rope, was "lashed round his mizzenmast" and strings were tied to his halter, his eyes expressed not pettish-

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ness but an inquiring perplexity. Then a gnat scaled his mountainous sides. Gnat! How was Bobby to know at this stage of the game that he bore the gallant Rudolpho, the queen's page? Later on this knowledge crept gradually into his tardy perceptions, and he put an extra curvet into his ambling and held his head somewhat more proudly.

Bobby was, above all things, dearly beloved; his heavy struggles in the fantastic fields of the imagination brought a look of persistent inquiry into his eyes, and this, with his well-meaning clumsiness, made him strangely like a little boy and provoked great bursts of affection. But, try as he might to enter into these games of the imagination, Bobby always retained an air of wistful reluctance. He never was quite sure of his cue—and what should have been a noble entrance-stride in the pageantry of play he blurred with a walk of questioning self-consciousness. Perhaps it was a personal sense of responsibility for my safety which hindered his dramatic development. Later a circus ring was made, and after long training Bobby galloped around it. Then came the moment for the World's Greatest Equestrienne—Queen of the Sawdust Ring—to make her flying mount. Quite properly speaking the flying mount was to be modified: one stirrup had been lengthened and the World's Greatest Equestrienne expected to make use of it. But this affair was not approved by Bobby, for at the first intimation that he was to be mounted he stopped with utmost consideration, his benign eyes full of worried inquiry. And no training, no discipline, no affection ever shook his convictions on this issue. He had the tremendous problem of adjusting the vagaries of a Celtic playfellow to his own Saxon temperament. After long endeavor he learned somewhat to gambol in the paths of pantomime; though, to speak truly, a joust remained always foreign to his affections. Bobby was logical rather than intuitive, and it took a meditating length of time for the perceptions of the romantic life to register on his perplexed and ponderous mind. Even after long training Bobby took a deeper interest in his oats than in the tremendous tournaments where arms clashed and noble causes always prospered.

But if Bobby preferred the quiet of solitude with leisure for an orderly procession of his own thoughts, interspersed, perchance, with occasional—quite occasional—interruptions for food, Sniff, a noble Kentuckian, leaped mind and heart and body to the service of imagination. His slender bay flanks, arched neck and tail, eyes wide open, ears always pricked forward, and nostrils quivering with excitement—all these equipped him for a part in the spectacle of life. No one was more fully aware of his perfections than himself. This is as it should be. "If I am a king and know it not, then shall I be no king." The very manner of his single-foot proclaimed: "All the world's a stage, and I'm the only person on it!" But, like his human friends of somewhat the same cast of character, he realized the æsthetic value of an audience; and in this realization he showed himself an artist. However this conviction may have sobered his secret mind, no trace of homage, no ignoble catering ever lessened the independent nobility of his outward behavior. He pranced as prettily for his shadow as for the judges—and, it may be an unworthy thought, for the possibility that he personalized his shadow and made of him a Tinker Bell of ever-fresh admiration. Sniff never stood, he posed; he never walked, he pranced; and it may be said of him that he made of life a glorious and beautiful pageant, through which, as a scarlet thread in some great tapestry, he galloped in a noble splendor. He set his stage and then took the centre of it; and because he was so beautiful and because he was so sure—the rest of his world granted it to him. But Sniff was more than a pretender, for to his beauty and assurance was added the perfect knowledge and practise of pace. To a natural grace he brought an exquisite surety of technic. He knew how to manage his feet; and higher intellects than his have failed in this.

Maid Marian, a noble beauty of high nerves, curvetted first into my knowledge under the massive boughs of a Sherwood. So it was she had her Saxon name though her nature belied it. A Castilian name or a Celtic would have been of deeper significance in revealing the shadow of her dreaming past. Because her inmost soul sheltered this half-guessed mystery, her nerves responded all the more intently to those inexplicable irritants of a well-bred horse: paper blowing beside the road, the black hole of a culvert, or sound coming from the unseen. She was not afraid of great sound,

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and in thunder and lightning would stand on the crest of a hill like a wild and beautiful spirit—in tune with the rhythms of black mystery. Bobby was dear and comic, Sniff loved a joke; but the Maid's eye was shadowed by some tragedy of phantom ages long since past, and she looked upon life in a sort of nobility of sorrow. The outer world moved in unseen circles, and she herself dwelt in a land of fantasy where seen things were all unreal and only the unseen were actual. The Maid had as kindly a heart as Bobby, as beautiful a pace as Sniff; but these things came to her not of training or volition, but through the mysteries of past ages and long lines of noble sires. When I rode Bobby I talked to him, when I rode Sniff I was proud; but before I even mounted Maid Marian I questioned my own worthiness.

TO be astride a horse—it connotes mastery, and it most readily betrays him who is not a master. Such a one mounts questioningly; he holds the reins as though they were fuses, and his eyes linger in tremulous inquiry on the horse's ears.

The Art of Riding

It is very simple to ride. As the White Knight so carefully explained to Alice, "The great art of riding is to keep your balance properly." To ride well parallels itself in subtler meanings with the mastery of life, for the keynote of both is only to keep your balance. Both the horse and the world recognize the master by the sure, firm hand on the reins. Yet the horse by his obedience has not become servile and he may yet teach the world something of his philosophy; for his sturdy neck arched in the strength of labor typifies noble effort, and he has learned to glorify drudgery and make of service a token of regality.

Stevenson always wanted to write a story about a man galloping up to an inn at night; and the very suggestion brings a tingle to the imagination.

> "By on the highway, low and loud,
> By at the gallop goes he."

He heard him in the sleepless midnights of his childhood; and, indeed, the sound of thudding hoofs always makes the heart beat faster. The sociable clattering of a single-footer on asphalt, the crackling of twigs and leaves on the quiet autumn trails, the muffled rhythm of a canter on the turf, its resonance on a bridge—all these make music in the ears and bring the very smell of adventure. To him who rides there is always "something lost behind the ranges"—and his heart yearns for it.

Riding makes for intimacy. My horse knows the touch of my hand; I understand his semaphoric ears—and we hold subtle and secret conversation. I think he likes to feel my hand under his mane and to have me talk to him; I like his clumsy gentleness, his yearning eyes, and his soft breathing when he puts his head close to mine. We like to go carefully through quiet mountain trails and then to stop suddenly to listen to the murmuring stillness of the woods. We like to come suddenly to an upland plateau where the wind blows strong, to stand on the highest point and hold our heads high and to take deep breaths. Neither of us is insensible to the artistic possibilities of our silhouette—though there be no one by to see. Riding brings also a certain calm regard of life; with it comes vigor of happiness, quietude of thought, and an unspeaking comrade who will listen. The whine of saddle leather and the soft jingling of the bit invite one to reposeful thought; and there is nothing in the world that synchronizes better with philosophic contemplation than the crisp, equine munching of a bit of grass.

But I am not always in this mood of meditation, and I love fierce, swift darts of speed, with the wind and the road rushing by. Nothing in the ecstasy of motion compares with the delightful wickedness of galloping up a hill; a series of peaks in Darien with new worlds sweeping to one's ken, the horizon leaping in the sky, then falling back to spread in wider circles on the land—and always before one the arching neck and proud head and the fuzzy softness of two ears pricked forward. Oh! I pray I may never be satisfied with the "equable jog-trot of feeling," but always, like some brave figure in an old romance, seek my new adventures in a hilly country, on the gallop—that in sudden bursts of vision my horizon may lift and spread itself into new worlds.

DOES the younger generation have anything so old-fashioned as a favorite newspaper? And did it ever flourish anywhere as it did in the country town? Not that the local journal was ever one's favorite. That distinction was re-

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One's Favorite Newspaper

served for the paper that came, twelve hours late, from the great city which was, for that town, the centre of things; the place where things happened, or to which the news of them came humming on the wires of the world. To the children of the family in the provincial town the newspaper favored by their elders was as integral a part of life as, say, the kitchen stove. One knew its pages and its columns as one knew the rooms of the house. Just as a particular kind of flower-vase was in the left-hand corner of the top shelf of the parlor closet to the right of the folding-doors, or a special bottle of medicine lived on the middle shelf of the little cupboard of the passage-way next the bathroom, so would you find certain items of news at the top of the first column on the third page, or at the bottom of the last column on the fourth. You knew your paper through and through. As to the editorials, you didn't usually read them when you were a child. As you grew up you did taste of them from time to time and learned their point of view. As children do not always walk in the footsteps of their fathers, quite possibly you did not agree with the opinions set forth, but that made no difference. The paper was an institution, whether you agreed with its politics or not.

In the family which I knew best there were two favorite newspapers, a daily and a weekly. There were others—the local paper which came daily and the outside ones which came incidentally, but these two were a matter of course, like daily bread. One hardly thought of life without them. The daily paper we read for the news and for its foreign correspondence; less for its editorials, even when we grew up, though they served the purpose of showing us that there were two sides to a question, since they differed so often from our weekly paper. That one we early learned to read, precisely on account of its editorials, those pungent, witty, sometimes ferocious comments and criticisms which showed neither fear nor favor. It was finely independent, our weekly, and praised or blamed irrespective of party; blaming more than it praised, to be sure, since human affairs are so imperfectly managed, but not the less entertaining for that reason. Mostly we agreed with it, but even when we did not agree we enjoyed it. Our daily undoubtedly trimmed its sails to the winds of party politics. We expected that and took no offense, even though we preferred independence.

So time went on. The younger generation in its turn grew old. The old editors died and were replaced by new ones, but we still read the favorite newspapers, caring as little as ever whether we agreed with their views so long as we were greeted by the familiar front page and could still find the various items at their old stands, or could be gently entertained by the same sort of criticism of life, even though a trifle less salted with wit than of old.

But all at once we have waked up. Great and terrible things are going on in the world. It is not enough for us to read the news. We must read also what is said about these portentous events abroad and about our own affairs at home which, more than ever before, are the affairs of the world. And now, when over a great part of the civilized world ordinary living is suspended and the stark realities are all that matters—now, to an extent we never thought of before, we find ourselves demanding that the men who, sitting in their offices, pen in hand, are trying to influence opinion, should subordinate politics to sincerity. Too much to ask, apparently, with a presidential election impending. In view of that election there must be, it seems, exaggeration here, suppression there; and much vituperative criticism which, with a little more pains, could be more seemly and yet quite as effective. And although the political opinions of our favorite paper matter no more to us than the political opinions of any other lifelong friend who may agree with us or differ from us without influencing our affection, its manners and its morals suddenly matter a great deal to our freshly awakened sensibilities.

We turn to our weekly. There, at least, we shall find sincerity and independence. We do find these qualities, but allied to a singular lack of adaptability, which also jars on us as it never did before. Our weekly elected some time ago to inherit traditions rather than tradition.

Well, of course we know that no journal which is the organ of a political party is going to put politics in the second place. We know, too, that no editorial has as much influence as its writer dreams that it may have. And we still read the newspapers, our two old friends among the rest; but gone is the day of the favorite. One feels a little homesick.

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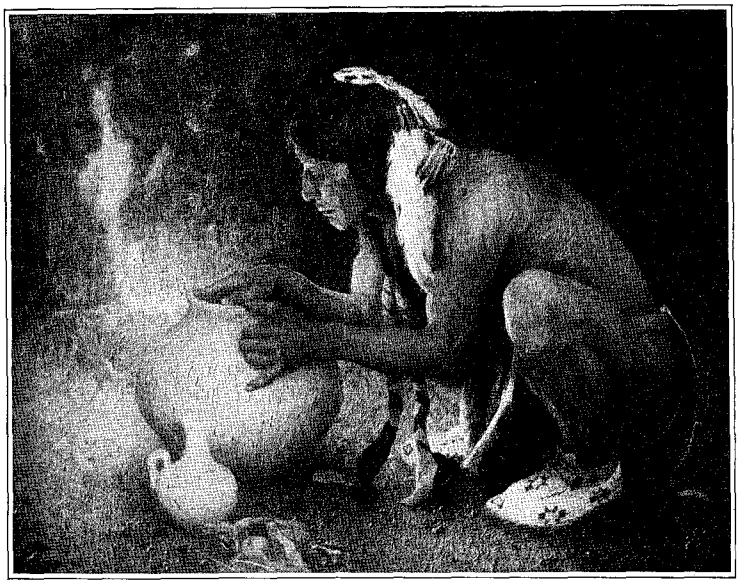
THE FIELD OF ART



"Making Pottery." By E. Irving Couse.
Carnegie Prize N. A. D. 1912. Owned by the Fort Worth Museum, Texas.

THE TAOS SOCIETY OF ARTISTS

FEW American painters of note have given serious study to the American Indian. A number of men have depicted the red man since the early day when Catlin went out with the dragoons to draw them from life upon the plains, but these men have, for the most part, left only faithful portraits of chiefs and tribesmen that, artistically, have little more value than colored photographs—documents of permanent value, to be sure, perpetuating the memory of a disappearing race. Most painters, like most of the public, if asked, would declare that the real Indian has passed away and that the degenerate of to-day is scarcely worthy of his brush.

Yet in certain parts of the Southwest, difficult of access, I confess, and primitive as far as living conditions are concerned, tribes of Indians still exist quite as Coronado found them centuries ago. Acoma perched upon its lofty mesa, the Hopi villages of the Painted Desert, and certain pueblos of the upper Rio Grande afford wonderful opportunity for the artist, but it is next to impossible to live in them without bringing along one's entire outfit.

In many ways the most extraordinary of them all is the pueblo of Taos. Here, luckily, only two miles from the Indian village, lies an old Mexican town, as picturesque in its way as the pueblo itself and affording a comfortable sort of Spanish hostelry. So the painters most interested in the Pueblo Indian and his ways, little by little, have congregated here and made this spot their headquarters. Set on a prodigious tableland at the feet of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, about ninety miles north of Santa Fé, Taos Pueblo piles its two great community houses, fortress and dwelling-place alike, five or six stories high, with the Taos River running merrily between.

The picturesque corrals of cedar logs; the warm, blank, sun-dried mud walls; the rude ladders that lead from terrace to terrace; the mountainsides clothed with forest; the never-ending reaches of prairie afford countless suggestions for pictorial background,

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while the Indians themselves focus the attention as they go about their work in their old accustomed ways, unchanged and practically untouched by centuries of contact with the white man. Basket-weavers and potters work in the primitive whitewashed rooms; women bake at the outdoor ovens; the men sit upon the roof-tops wrapped in blankets, blown into noble folds by the keen mountain breezes.

The pioneer among the Taos painters was Joseph Henry Sharp, who came down here from the Crow Reservation in Montana, where he has stayed for many a year in a commodious log cabin studying and painting the Indian. Ethnologically his work is of the greatest value, for he has painted from life a number of remarkably fine portraits of the plainsmen. One important group of these hangs in the Smithsonian Institution, while another, much larger, more than a hundred in all, has been given to the University of California by Mrs. Phœbe Hearst.

Mr. Sharp spared himself no pains in making these portraits and in studying the backgrounds suitable for his pictures, painting snow scenes out-of-doors, with the temperature near zero, and sharing in every way the primitive life of his models. His first studio in Taos was an abandoned church which he put in order and floored over with cedar "to keep the dead Penitentes down," as he quaintly expressed it. He then took an old garden adjoining and built himself a new and larger studio in the pueblo style, in which he now works and stores his rare and precious collections of baskets, mats, and costumes.

After him and at his suggestion, about seventeen years ago, two other painters came to Taos and became so enamoured with its possibilities that they sold their wagon and outfit and decided to settle there for good. One, Bert Phillips, has remained ever since. The other, Ernest Blumenschein, though he lives in New York, goes out to New Mexico almost every year.

"The Peacemaker." By E. L. Blumenschein.

Mr. Blumenschein's paintings of the Indian have improved steadily in quality and give great promise for the future. He does not content himself merely with the picturesque side of Indian life, but is preoccupied primarily with harmony of line, mass, and color, building compositions that "carry" and please the eye with their fine decorative effect. In this mood he painted his "Wise-man, Warrior, Youth," a group forming a noble silhouette against a gray-blue sky. There is a rare sympathy in the faces that far transcends the mere transcription of type. These three men might, indeed, be merely looking at a game, but then again they might be deeply thinking, pondering—the far-away, thoughtful expression on the youth's face in particular suggesting some vague memory, some indefinite longing.

This picture, when shown at the Academy a few years ago, was awarded the Isidor Gold Medal. "The Peacemaker," that followed it, is another decorative composition, but built on a more monumental plan, the two groups standing like pillars or caryatides at each side of the canvas, an extended

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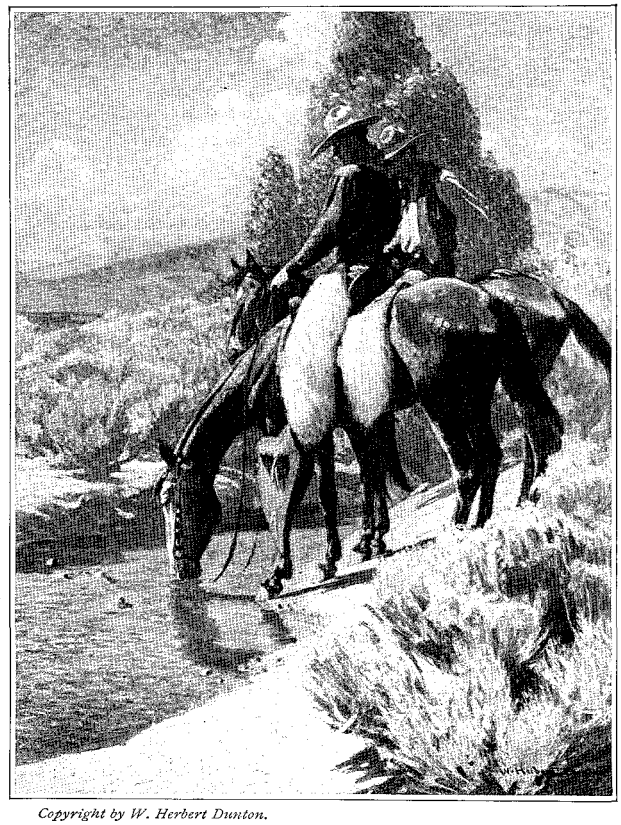
arm binding them together above, and the curving line of the deep canyon of the Rio Grande, rich and blue, tying them below. The effect is decidedly handsome and emphasizes Mr. Blumenschein's desire to find the truly decorative value of these Indian subjects—a task in which it is hoped he will persevere, for it is a field rich in possibilities and one that has scarcely been touched as yet.

These two pictures were his contribution to the Panama-Pacific Exposition, where they were awarded a medal. This year he has turned his attention in another direction, and has depicted the cunning, the latent power for evil, of the Indian—especially the warrior. Two carefully studied, life-size figures, the product of the past summer's work, emphasize this new tendency, one figuring in the Exhibition of the Men Who Paint the Far West, the other in this year's Academy—fine studies of character, rich in their colorations of burnt reds and tawny browns contrasting with well-chosen, cool grays.

The second of these pioneers, Mr. Phillips, as I have said, remained definitely in Taos, where he built himself a house. For many years he painted Indian heads—highly finished, faithful portraits—until trouble with his eyes forced him to abandon his art for a time and become a forest ranger. His experiences during these four years were remarkable, exploring every crevice of the mountains and imbibing the very spirit of the woods. The subjects of his later pictures are drawn from these themes, and he has pitched them in a much higher key than his earlier work. His most notable achievement is a large lunette in the court-house at Des Moines, a grouping of Indian figures dignified and sober in silhouette and restrained in color—altogether a notable achievement.

E. Irving Couse came to Taos a few years after these two, lived with the Mexicans for several years, and then established himself in his own house. He has chosen the romantic side of the Indian's life for the subjects of his pictures. A young man piping to a maiden, a runner drinking at a mountain stream, family groups gathered in corners of the pueblo, interiors where crouching figures are lit by fragrant cedar-wood fires—these are the episodes he likes best. His pictures have had a wide success and are well known to all who follow the American exhibitions, where they have been awarded many honors. He studied in Paris with the famous masters of his day, and his figures still show the influence of that early training in their solid drawing, careful modelling, and due regard for color values. Fifteen years ago he was elected to the water-color societies, then to the National Academy, and at this same period began his awards in various exhibitions. In 1911 he won the Isidor Gold Medal at the National Academy



Copyright by W. Herbert Dunton.

"The Crossing." By W. Herbert Dunton.

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with his "San Juan Pottery," an Indian squatting on his heels to examine a long-necked vase coated with the typical black glaze that distinguishes the pottery of the Santa Clara Valley—a picture that now hangs in the Detroit Museum.

In the following Spring Academy Mr. Couse won the Carnegie Prize with his "Making Pottery," a firmly modelled tribesman smoothing the rim of a fat jar that he has just moulded. Another fine canvas depicts his favorite model, Elkfoot (whose Spanish name, Hieronymos, is rendered into English as plain Jerry), a seated figure, life size, wrapped in a full red blanket, making a handsome silhouette against a simple background. Behind him rests his coup-stick for touching the dead, thus claiming the scalp. This picture was presented to the National Gallery in Washington by William T. Evans.

The most recent permanent acquisition to the Taos colony is W. Herbert Dunton, who has been known hitherto chiefly as an illustrator of Western life—the life of the plains—a limner of the cowboy, the Mexican, and the Indian environed by vast stretches of sun-baked sage-brush. Since his coming to Taos, however, he has been giving very serious attention to painting, devoting himself zealously to his favorite themes, studying the shifting light, the changeable effects, and lucid atmosphere of the Rocky Mountain wilds. He believes in painting direct from nature, and spares himself no trouble to get his effects, setting forth at times with models and half a dozen ponies of varied color—buckskin, roan, piebald—to paint them in a wind-storm, with his canvas anchored against the stiff breeze by big boulders.

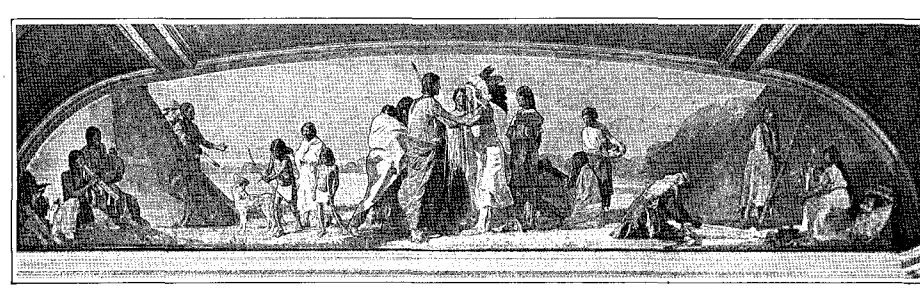
He has created himself a home in the Mexican quarter of the town that is picturesque as can be—a typical Mexican *chacal* with a forecourt surrounded by adobe buildings and set out with teepees from the plains. He dresses the frontiersman, and fits into the picture admirably with his tall, spare figure. Indeed, my last recollection of Taos, as I departed on the morning stage, was a vision of him and his model riding off upon a ridge-top against the sky, waving his canvas to me in sign of adieu.

The success of these men who paint the Indian should influence and encourage others to follow their lead. Why some of our "moderns," with their love for "vigor and vitality," their fondness for primitive color and pattern and the naïve crudities of aboriginal art, have not hit upon this pueblo country for their inspiration is a mystery. Why have they not studied the pictographs of Frijoles Canyon, the symbolic pottery of Acoma and the Zuni villages, the crude graces of the Hopi dancers, instead of feeling impelled to fare far afield to distant Polynesia and the Malays of Sumatra?

During these past few years a number of younger men have indeed come up to Taos, and last summer there were actually a dozen at one time in the old Mexican town, so that the permanent colony was encouraged to found the Taos Society of Artists, that, in August, held its first exhibition in a room of the Palace of the Governors at Santa Fé.

It is earnestly to be hoped that more of our painters, with their fine technical equipment, their virile natures and American spirit, will accept the lure of the West and go out to New Mexico, where, under the exciting stimulus of its vivid color and highly rarefied atmosphere they may be confidently expected to produce enduring works of art.

ERNEST PEIXOTTO.



"The First Inhabitants—Hospitality."

A decoration by Bert G. Phillips in the Des Moines, Iowa, Court-House.

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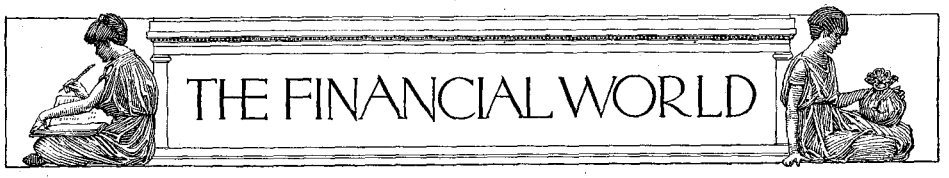

THE WORLD'S MONEY MARKETS IN WAR TIME

BY ALEXANDER DANA NOYES

Financial Editor of the New York *Evening Post*

DURING all the period of war-time prosperity in this country, one of the most familiar incidents of active trade and rising markets has been lacking. Prosperity and "business booms" of the past have led the way, quite without exception, to an era of high money rates. After more than a year of such financial and industrial conditions, the American market still found itself surrounded with the phenomena of "easy money." As the first half of 1916 drew toward its end, there were some faint signs which caused more or less cautious prediction of a change. That possibility makes it timely to review the somewhat remarkable history of Europe's money markets and our own, since the war began.

Prosperity and "Easy Money"

It was unquestionably the general expectation at the beginning of the war, that a period of very dear money, with possible great resultant financial distress, was in sight the world over. The reasoning on which the markets based this conclusion was apparently convincing. Demands on the world's money and investment markets, for the sums of capital required to conduct a modern war on such a scale as this, would vastly exceed any former requisitions in the history of finance. Since the available supply of capital, in the half-dozen or more nations engaged in war, would be absorbed in loans issued for a war expenditure at the rate of $50,000,000 to $100,000,000 per day, ordinary financial and business enterprise would have to pay abnormally high rates to procure the funds for its own absolute necessities.

Nor was this conclusion based on general principles alone. When even the small Transvaal War broke out in the autumn of 1899, the Bank of England raised its official discount rate from 3 per cent to 6; the last-named figure having been reached only twice in a quarter of a century. The Imperial Bank of Germany put up its rate from 4 per cent to the almost unprecedented figure of 7, and all other European markets followed. A period of extreme tension continued on every money market until it was seen how the conflict in South Africa would be circumscribed. Similar results accompanied the outbreak of the Balkan War in the autumn of 1912, when the bank rate in half the Continental cities stood for months at the abnormal figure of 6 per cent; money markets throughout Europe remaining in a state of tension up to the end of 1913.

FURTHERMORE, actual events in the money markets, on the outbreak of the present European war, seemed to bear out the earlier anticipations. Even before the German ultimatums of July 31, but when war was apparently inevitable, rates began rising to unusual heights. By August 1 the Bank of England fixed its official rate at 10 per cent, the highest figure in the institution's history. Only a few weeks before the

When the Rate Rose Rapidly

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rate had been 3 per cent. The official discount rate of the Bank of France went in a fortnight from 3½ per cent to 6; at the Bank of Germany from 4 to 6; at the Banks of Belgium and Austria from 4 to 8. During the first week in August it was possible to say that money for ordinary purposes was unprocurable from the banks at either London, Paris, or Berlin. On the New York market loans payable on demand, which had commanded only 2 per cent earlier in July, went suddenly to 10 per cent, and loans for two or three months from 2½ per cent to 7.

This apparently logical response to war conditions continued, as we shall see, only for a very brief period. It will doubtless be the judgment of economic history that the extreme derangement of the money markets during August, 1914, was not the foreshadowing of the financial influence of war, but the direct reflection of perhaps the greatest of all financial panics. When actual panic was ended, through the "special holidays," the moratorium on debts, and the extension of large credits under government auspices, the abnormally high money rate came down. Yet there were reasons why its much longer continuance might have been expected, even on the basis of actual events. Traditionally, the Bank of England does not allow the ratio of its gold reserve to its deposit liabilities to fall below 40 per cent—a figure which Bagehot, the historian of Lombard Street, described as the "apprehension minimum." Now, in the first week of August, 1914, because of the run on the Bank of England and the enormous expansion of its loans to protect embarrassed private bankers, this ratio of reserve fell to 14⅝ per cent; a percentage lower than any reached in half a century, except for a moment in the great London panic of 1866. Nevertheless the bank rate, after being raised to 10 per cent on the 1st of August, was reduced again to 5 per cent scarcely a week later, and has remained at that lower rate without a single change during the subsequent months of war.

Not only was this so, but the rate for ordinary loans on Lombard Street got down early in 1915 to less than 2 per cent, and only at rare intervals thereafter did it rise even as high as the Bank of England rate. The lowest quotation on the open London discount market during 1915 was 1¼ per cent, in February; the highest 5¼, in December, and the average for the whole year only 3¾. This happened notwithstanding the fact that the Bank of England's gold reserve, which had been brought up to $361,000,000 in November, 1914, dropped back again to $251,000,000 toward the end of 1915, while the "ratio of reserve," which had reached the respectable figure of 34½ per cent at the end of 1914, declined to 16¾ in the middle of 1915. The usual and perfectly familiar recourse of the London market at a time of such movements at the Bank—especially when, as happened in 1915, the Bank's position has been weakened by heavy export of gold—is to advance the Bank of England's discount rate arbitrarily. That action has the result of forcing up money rates in the open London market; thereby attracting capital from other foreign markets where it is earning less, and thus, through its influence on the foreign exchanges, drawing gold from abroad to the Bank of England.

Why the Rate Has Kept Down

BUT in all the period since the first week of this present war the Bank has not once adopted that historic recourse. One reason doubtless was that the condition of other European markets rendered automatic import of gold from them to London, as a result of such procedure, quite impossible. Another was that, although the American markets held

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(Continued from page 262)

unusually large reserves in gold, and although the drain on the Bank of England reserve was chiefly caused by shipment of gold to the United States, nevertheless the purchases of war material by England in this country were so stupendous in amount that even the gold export movement to New York could not be controlled, or even greatly affected, by a mere difference between the money rates of the two markets. But a third and important reason was the mass of foreign indebtedness to London banking-houses, which at the outbreak of hostilities had been assumed by the Bank of England for the full duration of the war; such houses to pay interest to the Bank at 2 per cent over the Bank rate. That arrangement meant payment of 7 per cent by the banking-houses, on all such foreign bills assumed by the Bank of England; and it is easy to see what burden would have been imposed on the London bankers by a further considerable rise in the Bank rate with the resultant higher rate which they would have to pay.

Nevertheless the question remained, how was it possible for easy money to continue in the face of the huge requisition of capital for the war? This problem at the start had equally disturbed financial minds in the United States; yet here, as in England, tight-money conditions proved to be only temporary. During the actual "war panic" period, hoarding of cash by depositors became so great that cash in the New York bank reserves, which at the end of July was $25,000,000 more than was required to make up the 25 per cent ratio of reserve to deposits, stipulated by the banking law, fell in the later weeks of August to a figure $47,000,000 less than the legal requirement. This condition at the New York banks continued up to the third week of October, 1914, by which time the return of hoarded money had at least removed the deficit. The New York money market accordingly yielded, though more slowly than at London, and the next twelve months were marked by abnormally low rates.

Not Due to Federal Reserve Banks

IT has been a common impression that this favorable turn in the New York bank position and in the American money market was a result of the new banking law. It is certainly true that the Federal Reserve Banks went into operation under that law in 1914; it is also true that the subsequent reports of the New York banks not only showed restoration of the surplus reserve beyond legal requirements, but raised that surplus in September, 1915, to the enormous sum of $224,000,000, whereas the highest previous surplus in New York banking history had been the $111,600,000 of February, 1894. But this astonishing result was due in no respect to operations of the new Federal Reserve Banks. Actual cash held in the vaults of the New York banks rose from $496,000,000 at the end of June, 1914, and $382,000,000 in the second week of August to $526,000,000 in September, 1915, plus $29,000,000 deposited with other banks.

But that increase could not have resulted from the new banking system; indeed, the tendency of the Federal Reserve machinery was to decrease, not increase, actual cash holdings in the banks' own vaults. Every individual bank in the system was required to pay in gold, as its subscription to the stock of the Federal Reserve Bank in its district, 6 per cent of its own capital stock and surplus—

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which meant, in the case of New York City banks, the surrender of $20,000,000 from their cash reserves. The great change in the bank position was due to other causes; it would in all probability have happened, even had the old banking system been continued; it was a quite inevitable outcome of the unprecedented import of $451,000,000 gold by this country during 1915, of which upward of $300,000,000 came from England, or from Canada on England's account.

The moral influence of the new banking system was undoubtedly very great on financial sentiment during the first year or two of the European war, and its influence is destined, as I shall try to show later on, to be very much greater hereafter. But it did not cause either the quick mastery of panic by our banks in 1914, or the return to easy money during 1915. Speeches at the political conventions of last June quite generally ascribed to the new banking system both achievements; especially the successful surmounting of the strain of August, 1914. But the new banking system did not go into operation until nearly four months after that month began, and its facilities for expanding banking credits were virtually untouched up to the middle of 1916. Meantime, however, despite the investment of our markets, to the extent of a thousand million dollars during the single year 1915, in loans to foreign countries, and despite the rapid revival in home trade with its natural demand on credit, money rates on Wall Street, even for three months' time, never in 1915 rose above the very low rate of 3 per cent.

IT now remains to explain these remarkable results; to show why the seemingly reasonable predictions of a tight-money era during continuance of the war were so notably unfulfilled, and to ask whether the present signs of higher money indicate a change. It is

(Continued on page 58)

The Road to Independence

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possible that a study of the facts which bear upon this question may throw a little light on what is likely to happen when the war is over.

This much may be said, to begin with: that the failure of the absorption of such huge sums of capital in war loans to force money rates to a high figure, and hold them there, is in at least one respect in line with past experience. Money rates are traditionally regulated by demand for credit at the banks; rising as such demands enlarge, falling as they decrease. Supposing that a subscriber to a Government war loan merely reinvests in that security the money accruing to him from salary, rents, or interest and dividends on former investments, there will be no necessary strain on the general money market. He does not borrow; he merely transfers the sum in question from one bank account to another. When, on the other hand, the money for such investment is borrowed from the banks, or when speculators use money similarly borrowed to force up prices of securities or commodities, in order to sell out with a profit on the advance, the banks soon feel the strain of increased liabilities on their own account, and put up their lending rates accordingly.

The Force of Regulation by Law

But no such process has been under way in Europe. Speculation for the rise has been sternly discouraged and restricted. At London, Berlin, and Paris, Governments have by edict forbidden transactions with borrowed money on the stock exchanges. It is true that, in Germany, "loan banks" under Government auspices have been established to enable individuals to borrow money, either for subscriptions to Government loans or for private purposes. But the rate of interest charged at the German loan banks, or "Darlehnskassen," is strictly regulated by law, at a figure only fractionally above the German Imperial Bank rate. At London, where for a time the Bank of England engaged to lend money on security of subscriptions to its first war loan, and to the full face value of such subscriptions, the lending rate was fixed arbitrarily at 1 per cent below the Bank of England's official 5-per-cent rate. In other words, the usual influences making for high money in such directions were suppressed by law.

THERE naturally still remained the demands for credit to use in ordinary trade. It might still have been imagined that, with all available capital absorbed in subscriptions to the war loans, resources of the banks would have been so heavily depleted as to make rise in money rates unavoidable. But three considerations intervened to prevent that outcome. The first was the great decrease in volume of ordinary business during war time, and therefore the proportionate decrease in the amount of money or credit needed to conduct that trade. The surest witness to such tendencies is the amount of checks drawn on the banks. In England "bank clearings" at the great London institutions, during the second half of 1914, decreased $11,000,000,000, or 33 per cent, from the same period a year before. The full year 1915 showed a decrease of $6,600,000,000, or 9 per cent, as compared with 1914. Not only, in fact, had England's normal commercial activities at home decreased, but its export trade for the full year 1915 was smaller by 24 per cent than in 1913, the last previous full year of peace. These facts provide the most obvious explanation of the fact that the war-time money market was not affected by requirements of trade. A further reason was that the money raised on Government loans was for the most part paid out at home, thus not disturbing bank reserves; or if, as in purchases of munitions of war in the

Decrease in Ordinary Business in England

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CONSERVATIVE SECURITY REVIEW

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United States, it was spent on foreign markets, the outlay was made wholly by the Government, and partly at least provided for by borrowings from the American markets themselves. Back of all this stood the further and highly important fact that every belligerent government, including England, was issuing an emergency paper currency. That currency, providing as it did a new circulating medium for ordinary hand-to-hand transactions, relieved to precisely that extent the usual draft for such purposes on the reserve money of the banks.

Unusual Influences in the United States

THE reasons for easy money in the United States during the first two years of war were of a very different order. We have seen how largely the reserves of American banks, at New York and other cities, increased in response to the unprecedented import of gold. Those importations represented England's efforts to meet the huge liabilities incurred, first through purchases of grain from our own overflowing harvests after Europe's short crops of 1914, and next through orders for war material, placed in the United States. It was these influences, combined with actual transfer of capital by neutral communities from London to New York, which forced New York exchange last autumn to $4.50 in the pound sterling, representing the quite unprecedented discount of 7¼ per cent, and it was that turn in the situation which compelled the British Government not only to arrange for borrowing in the United States, but to send to New York, directly or indirectly, practically all the gold delivered from the Transvaal mines, which England owns. London could not allow its international financial prestige to be damaged by the quoting of the sovereign at such a discount on a foreign market.

But the result of these gold imports was, that American banks of 1915 were confronted with the problem, not how to avoid the tight money popularly associated with war time, but how to keep their funds on loan at a rate which would be remunerative, without encouraging excited speculation on the markets, and asking higher rates accordingly. American banks last year actually competed with one another to lend money, even at the low prevailing rates. All of them found it difficult to keep their available funds outstanding. During considerable periods even the European Governments purchasing war material in America made their immediate payments through loans raised from the New York banks, and repayable on demand. The borrowers were sure that such repayment would not be required at an inconvenient moment.

But with the later months of 1915 a new influence appeared in the situation. Not only had prices on the Stock Exchange advanced substantially, causing equivalent increase in the request for credit at the banks, but normal business activity expanded at an extremely rapid rate. Bank checks drawn on all banks in the United States during the first quarter of 1915 increased 9 per cent from the year before. In the second quarter, they increased 4 per cent. During the third quarter, in which the figures of 1915 compared with those of the first three months of war, the total increase was 30 per cent; in the fourth quarter, 68 per cent. The last three months of 1915 brought bank clearings in the whole United States 25 per cent above the highest record for that period in any previous year.

Expansion continued in the first three months of 1916, when checks exchanged at the banks of the United States ran 30 per cent beyond the highest previous record. Even outside of New York City bank checks drawn in the opening quarter of the present year increased 28 per cent over 1915. The increase in the Middle States was 65 per cent; the South,

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despite the handicap of the shrinking foreign market for its staple product, reported an increase of 25 per cent. These figures pointed unmistakably to great increase in American trade activity. But the result of such increase always is, first a much larger circulation of actual cash in the hands of prosperous tradesmen and busy laborers, but next such creation of new loans by banks at all interior centres, to conduct the active trade, as would call for enlarged supplies of cash in the vaults of the institutions, in order to keep their own reserves up to the proportion required by law. This is the real explanation of the decrease of cash in the vaults of New York banks, from $536,367,000 last January to $414,614,000 in June, and for the fall in the so-called "surplus reserve" to $55,850,000 on June 10, 1916, as against the $224,122,000 maximum of last autumn.

But these are precisely the circumstances which, at ordinary times, lead to a rise in money. In the middle of the present year, bank reserves in all sections of the country were still substantially above the usual level of the season. The question was, whether the process of depleting them, through continued activity in American trade, would not be so far emphasized in the active autumn months as to produce the familiar results. I have shown what causes were operating in that direction. There are at least two important opposing influences.

The New Influx of Gold

ONE is continuance of the import of European gold. With the opening of 1916, London ceased to send gold to New York. Heavy sales of American securities from England seemed to have redressed the inequalities of exchange; in the three months after January, we exported $14,000,000 more gold than we imported. But this condition turned out to be purely temporary. The inflow of gold

(Continued on page 62)

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was resumed, and in six weeks after the middle of May fully $100,000,000 was imported. The effect was soon visible in bank reserves; presumably they would rise toward their previous high level with increasing rapidity, if the gold import should continue.

How long it could continue was the question of perplexity. The British Government was known to have accumulated a fund of gold in Canada, not reported in the Bank of England's reserve, and it was from this fund that the consignments for New York were drawn. How large it was the markets were not informed; but there would seem to be some limit to the possible size of any such accumulation. In our market's power to draw from Europe either gold or securities, however, there was no relaxation. The statement of the country's foreign trade for May showed merchandise exports $61,000,000 greater than in any other month of the present war, and larger by $194,000,000 than in any month of our commercial history before the war.

The other offsetting influence is the machinery of the Federal Reserve Banks. Continued shrinkage in bank reserves and a considerable rise in money rates, if not accompanied by a still larger advance in the lending rates of those institutions, would lead individual banks to turn over loans of their own to the Reserve Banks for "rediscount"; thereby relieving themselves of the existing burden and strengthening their reserves. That the Federal Reserve Banks, whose cash holdings in the middle of this year were four times as large as the total sum of their rediscounts, would have abundant capacity to perform this office on a very substantial scale, is quite unquestionable. The only question would be that concerning the disposition of the Federal Reserve Board to control the money market.

If it were thought that existing money rates were unduly low, the

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Reserve Banks would naturally raise their own rate for rediscount, and the general money market would follow. This is a traditional office of the central banking institution. Such action is, however, usually taken either because the bank position as a whole is weak, or because low money rates have encouraged reckless speculation, or because it is desired to import gold. The last-named motive could not exist in the face of the gold arrivals from Canada. The existence of the other motives would be determined largely by the course of events next autumn.

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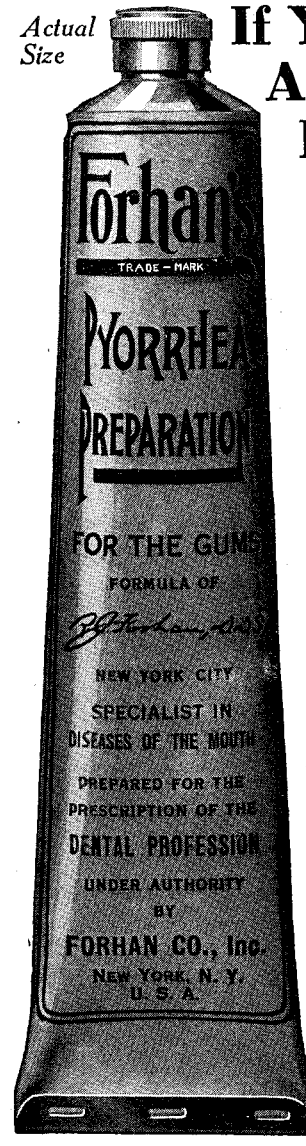

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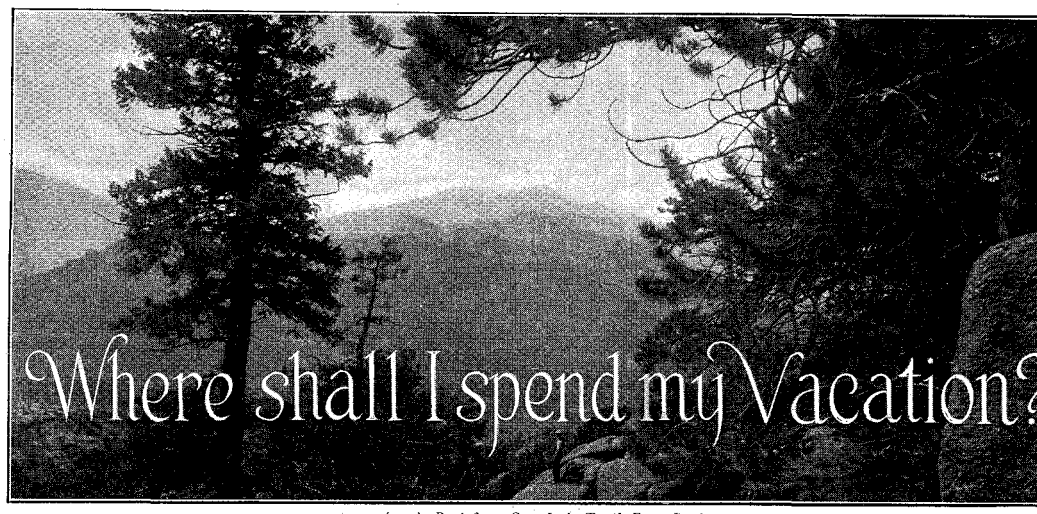

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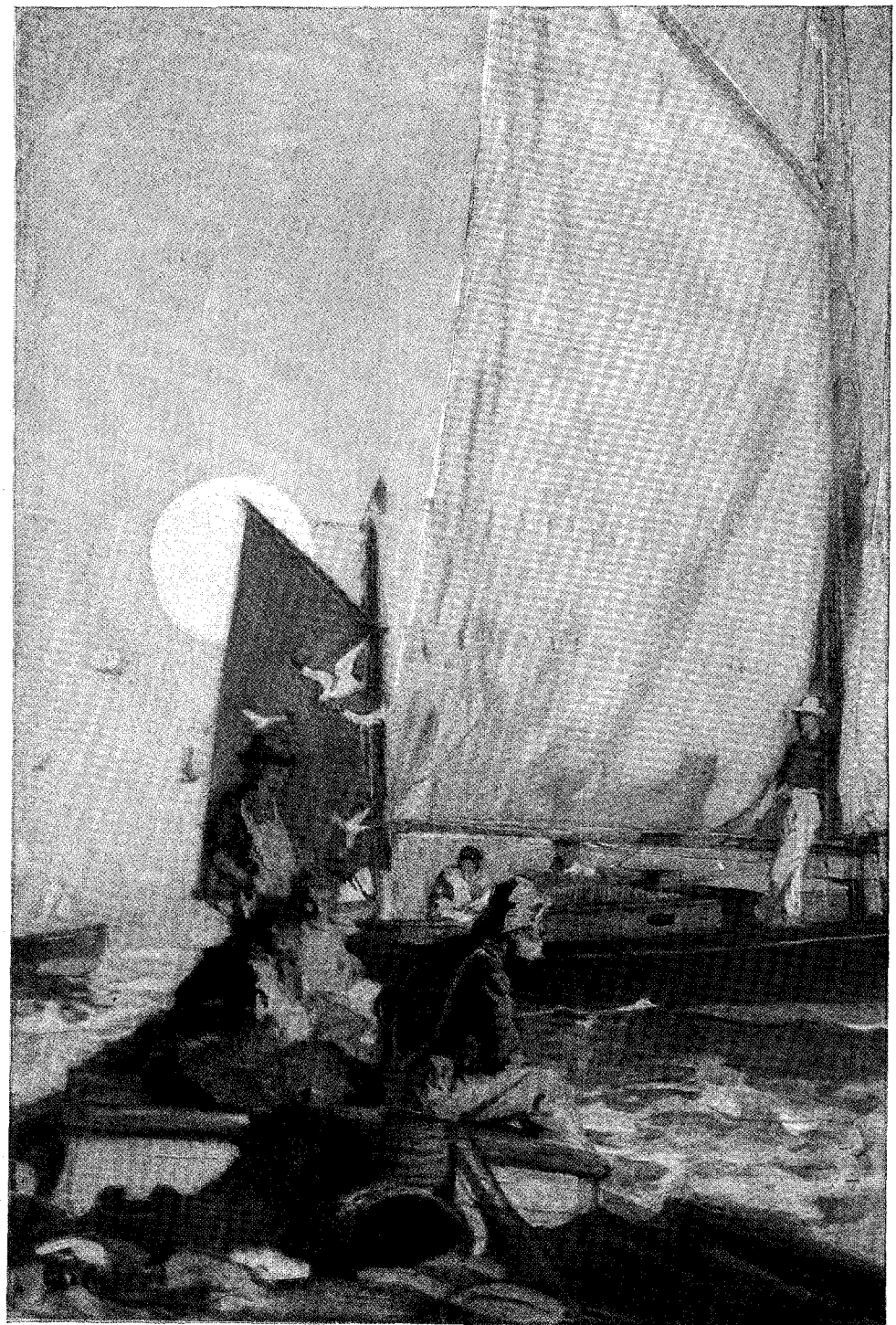

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